



The City of Calgary Parks

BOWNESS PARK: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2009



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BOWNESS PARK: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recognition of Bowness Park's nearly 100 year history and in response to its enduring popularity and severe use pressures, in May 2008 City of Calgary Parks commissioned a team of consultants to establish a framework for heritage and cultural landscape conservation as well as refurbishment and appropriate redevelopment of the Park, positioning it for continued use and enjoyment by Calgarians as it enters its second century of park service.

A comprehensive inventory and assessment of Bowness Park features was conducted to identify opportunities, issues and concerns relating to activities and attractions, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, natural elements, historic elements, and functional and operational factors. Findings were presented at public Open Houses in October 2008 and attendees were encouraged to comment on what aspects of the Park they found most endearing, what aspects were problematic and how the Park should be developed for the future.

Input gleaned from public comment was utilized in preparation of conceptual alternatives for Bowness Park. Conceptual alternatives were reviewed with City of Calgary Parks, a preferred concept was decided upon and the concept was refined and documented in graphic form. The preferred concept, addressing lagoon and channel characteristics, pedestrian and vehicle circulation, play and picnic facilities, natural elements and historical elements, was presented at public Open Houses in February 2008. The response was strongly positive in support of the selected concept.

The redevelopment plan for Bowness Park was further refined, addressing concerns and suggestions expressed by Open House attendees and stakeholders. The costs associated with implementing the redevelopment plan were estimated and a phasing strategy was documented. Public Open House and information sessions were held in June 2009 to share the finalized Bowness Park development plan and phasing strategy with stakeholders and the general public.

The development plan proposed for Bowness Park is intended to reverse the decline of natural amenities in the Park, provide for refurbishment and redevelopment of selected built features, and ensure the Park is capable of meeting the recreation aspirations of Calgarians over the coming decades. Highlights of the plan are presented in the following paragraphs.

Activities and Attractions:

- The Central Square will be redeveloped as a pedestrian space and the hub of Park activity.
- At the southern edge of the Central Square, a permanent stepped deck will provide safe and easy access to the lagoon for boating in the summer and skating in the winter.
- The existing Concessions Pavilion will be refurbished with a food kiosk, washrooms and a warming space in the winter. The historic Tea House will be reinterpreted as a venue for casual dining and will feature panoramic views over the lagoon.
- The lagoon and channels will remain essentially as they are but with water levels maintained at consistent levels throughout the year.
- The historic swimming facility will be reinterpreted as a contemporary wading pool occupying the original location at the east end of the lagoon.
- The open playfields will remain and picnic sites will be redistributed more informally throughout the Park.
- The miniature train will remain in its current location, although replacement of track and rolling stock will become necessary in the future..

Circulation:

- Vehicular circulation in the Park will be simplified with parking consolidated in the central part of the Park.
- On busy summer weekends overflow parking will be directed to Baker Park and an open air shuttle will operate between Bowness Park and Baker Park.
- The regional pathway will be completed through the Park and existing roadways will be converted to pedestrian and cycle pathways. Regional and secondary pathways will have paved asphalt surfaces.
- The footpaths along the bank of the Bow River and adjacent to the channel will be upgraded to a compacted gravel standard.
- Long term plans (25 plus years) include a pedestrian bridge connecting to Baker Park midway between Stoney Trail and 85th Street NW.

Natural Elements:

- The Bow River bank between the groynes will be armoured with cobble rip rap and naturalized through bio-remediation with native trees and shrubs.
- A series of stone steps will provide safe, directed access to the shallow water between the groynes.
- New plantings of native tree species (Black Cottonwood, Balsam Poplar, White Spruce) will be installed in natural groupings to enhance age class diversification and health of stands. Non-native tree species will be selectively removed.
- Mowing programs in native tree stands will be curtailed to encourage natural regeneration.

Historic Elements:

- The Lagoon, Central Square and miniature train will be restored as previously noted.
- Missing historical elements that will be reinterpreted include the Tea House, wading pool, summer cabins and campsites. A series of interpretive panels will illustrate the Bowness Park story.
- The only missing element to be re-created will be the 'Orthophonic' device, a gabled structure located in the centre of the lagoon used to play recorded music.

Functional Factors:

- An alternate Emergency Access Route will be built on the east side of 85th Street NW and connecting under the 85th Street Bridge to the central section of the Park.
- The channel control structures will be rebuilt so water levels in the lagoon can be maintained year round.
- The Parks Maintenance Depot will be relocated and the area reclaimed as parkland. A modest facility will be installed north of the lagoon to facilitate ice maintenance operations in winter.

An implementation strategy and cost estimates have been prepared for the redevelopment of Bowness Park. Priorities for implementation with associated costs are organized in three broad categories.

- Elements required to ensure public safety and operational viability of Bowness Park.

Estimated Costs.....**\$1,390,000.00**

- Elements required to sustain current levels of use and ensure natural and built amenities are conserved and available to Calgarians.

Estimated Costs.....**\$4,812,000.00**

- Elements to enhance enjoyment of Bowness Park, honour it's historic past and secure continued popularity.

Estimated Costs.....**\$4,084,000.00**

Development Plan Budget.....**\$10,286,000.00**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Bowness Park has been a much loved fixture of Calgary's river valley park system for nearly 100 years. The park, situated on the south bank of the Bow River, is one of the best known and most intensively used in the entire system. The lagoon; the shaded picnic sites, and proximity to the Bow River have ensured its popularity over the years, both summer and winter.

Bowness Park is a significant cultural landscape – defined by the interaction of people with a natural amenity and by an expression of the values and lifestyles of the people who developed it and have enjoyed it over the decades. It has evolved from a wilderness resort to an amusement and pleasure ground, to a natural retreat surrounded by urban development. The park is cherished as a place for family recreation in a perceived natural environment; this has historically been, and continues to be, Bowness Park's most fundamental and defining characteristic.

In recognition of the Park's singular history, and in response to its enduring popularity which has resulted in severe use pressures, in May 2008 City of Calgary Parks commissioned a consulting team led by IBI/Landplan to plan for contemporary and future use at Bowness Park. The team is comprised of professionals from IBI/Landplan, Leonard Novak Landscape Architect Ltd. and Kestrel Research Incorporated. IBI/Landplan is landscape architecture and environmental planning practice, Len Novak specializes in heritage landscape preservation, and Kestrel Research Incorporated is a firm of experienced bio-physical assessment specialists. Michelle Reid, project manager for City of Calgary Parks, has a background in cultural landscapes and has served as an integral member of the team.

The objective of the planning exercise is to establish a framework for heritage and cultural landscape conservation, refurbishment and appropriate redevelopment at Bowness Park, positioning it for continued use and enjoyment by Calgarians as it enters its second century of park service.

1.2 Planning Process and Public Consultation Overview

Inventory and Assessment

The Consulting Team, in collaboration with City of Calgary Parks personnel and other stakeholders, undertook a comprehensive inventory of current conditions at Bowness Park. Issues and concerns were identified and categorized into three general areas:

- Concerns with Natural and Built Elements
- Issues relating to use patterns
- Consideration of Historic Elements

Assessment of the physical condition of Park elements was completed, as well as an assessment of the relative significance or severity of the issues facing Bowness Park. Findings were summarized in graphic form on panels suitable for public presentation.

Public Input Session

A public Open House was hosted by City of Calgary Parks on October 22, 2008 at the Bowness Sportsplex, 7904 43rd Avenue N.W. Open House sessions at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm were attended by nearly 150 Calgarians who commented on the findings of the Consulting Team. Attendees were asked to comment on what they thought was most problematic, and how they would like to see the Park developed in the future.

Planning

The comments from nearly 140 response forms were tabulated and the information gleaned from the public input was utilized in preparing conceptual alternatives. Conceptual alternatives were reviewed with City of Calgary Parks, a preferred concept was selected, and the concept was refined and documented in graphic form.

Public Review Session

A second public Open House was held at the Bowness Sportsplex on February 18, 2009. Sessions were conducted at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm and were attended by approximately 100 Calgarians. Attendees were asked to respond to components of the conceptual plan including Lagoon and channel characteristics, pedestrian and automobile circulation, play and picnic facilities, natural elements and historic elements. The response was overwhelmingly positive in favour of the selected concept.

Plan Resolution and Documentation

The preferred concept for Bowness Park has been refined, addressing comments and concerns expressed by the Open House attendees and stakeholders. Cost estimates for implementation of the Bowness Park development plan have been prepared and a phasing strategy documented. Open House and information sessions were held at the Bowness Sportsplex on June 17, 2009 to share the finalized Bowness Park development plan and phasing strategy with stakeholders and the general public. The tasks undertaken, the findings and the preparation of the Bowness Park design development plan are presented in this report.

2. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Park History

Bowness Park is an island in the Bow River in the northwest corner of the Community of Bowness. The Park was created by developer John Hextall as a nature retreat and pleasure resort in the early 1900s. As further developed and operated by the City of Calgary, it has continued to be a cherished, traditional place of family recreation.

Events and features in the evolution of the Park span a hundred years. A timeline of the Park's history is included in the Appendices. At present, while the river front and forest as well as some of the basic created elements of the Park – the channel / lagoon system and the roadway network – remain in their original locations, their forms have changed over time and nearly all of the other historic pieces, including the old buildings and built amusements, are gone. Refer to Inventory and Assessment – Historic Elements in this report.

The following documents have been used in writing about historical aspects of the Park:

- Bowness Park Timeline; Harry Sanders, 2008
- Bowness: Our Village in the Valley; Calgary: Bowness Historical Society, 2005
- Bowness Park Cultural Landscape Report; Heritage Collaborative Inc., 2007

2.2 Context

Bowness Park is located on the south bank of the Bow River in Calgary's northwest quadrant. The Park site is an alluvial island in the flood plain of the Bow River separated from the residential uplands to the south by a channel/lagoon system and the heavily forested escarpment. Stoney Trail bridge passes above the western tip of the Park, and while one of the bridge's massive structural pylons is located in the Park, impact of the sight and sound of the roadway is modest. Baker Park and the Scenic Bow Group Homes are situated across the Bow River to the north. The embankment of 85th Street NW bisects the eastern end of Bowness Park, resulting in a section of the Park that is somewhat isolated.

2.3 Physical Characteristics

The size of Bowness Park is approximately 30 hectares (75 acres), measuring nearly 2 kilometres from east to west but with an average width of 170m and measuring only 120m at the narrowest section. The alluvial island on which the Park is located is low lying, relatively flat land and is subject to flooding. The bank of the Bow River has been armoured with rock and a series of groynes as protection against ice flows, flooding and natural erosion.

The parkland supports a riparian forest of primarily Black Cottonwood and Balsam Poplar with an understory of associated shrubs and grass groundcover. The west end of Bowness Park and the section east of 85th Street NW have been minimally modified from their native condition, exhibiting mature stands of native Poplar and White Spruce with diverse natural understory growth. Numerous non-native species of trees have been introduced throughout the central area of Bowness Park with well established plantings ranging in age from 30 to 40 + years

The escarpment south of the channel/lagoon network, under private ownership and not part of the parkland, is a significant wooded backdrop to the Park and contains large stands of White Spruce and Douglas Fir.

In the central sections of Bowness Park the natural tree cover and understory has been modified over time to facilitate recreational use, firstly with clearing of areas of the forest for open lawn spaces and the impoundment of the channel to create the lagoon, and subsequently with provision of roadways, parking, footpaths and the placement of structures. The only vehicular access to the Park is by a bridge over the channel at the west edge of the lagoon. Pedestrian access to the Park is gained via the entry bridge, from 85th Street and from the foot bridge suspended beneath the Stoney Trail bridge. A regional pathway connects to the west end of Bowness Park and via the Stoney Trail foot bridge, to the regional pathway in Baker Park. Local pathways connect the Park to the adjacent Bowness community.

3. CURRENT ISSUES

As Calgary's population has surpassed the one million mark, public use of Bowness Park has increased and become more intense each year. The Park's visitors come not only from the burgeoning communities in the northwest quadrant of Calgary, and especially from the Bowness district, but also from other quadrants of the City because of Bowness Park's unique setting and recreational resources.

Social and economic change in Calgary is reflected in new trends of activity at the Park with greater interest in physical fitness as well as increased environmental appreciation. Urban residents value the experience of nature in the Park, particularly by means of walking and strolling. The former mechanized amusements are correspondingly less popular, partly because such opportunities can be found elsewhere, including at home. Picnicking is continuously popular at the Park as is skating in winter. While most Calgary families have the means to travel to other wilderness places, the increasing numbers of newcomers to Calgary are more inclined to enjoy such recreation in public parks like Bowness Park, just as they did in their places of origin.

3.1 Traffic and Parking Issues

Bowness Park has a single entry point for all vehicles including Park patrons, maintenance vehicles and emergency services. The road system within the Park has evolved over time resulting in some awkward and confusing decision points and intersections. The main road system is comprised of the entry road which accesses central parking areas, a two-way road and turnaround accessing the eastern section of the Park and a one-way loop road accessing the western reaches of the Park. Parking spaces on both the east road and the northern leg of the one-way loop are very close to the Bow River bank, allowing parked cars to dominate prime areas in the Park.

There are approximately 560 parking spaces within Bowness Park. Parking is adequate for winter use and mid-week summer use. On summer weekends and long weekends in particular, the roadway and parking facilities are heavily congested, sometimes resulting in gridlock, double parking and illegal parking encroaching onto parkland. Park Operations personnel report that on some weekends the Park gates have been closed because the Park was too full. Some of the parking surfaces consist of crushed shale, particularly on the east and west roads; these surfaces become muddy and messy during spring melt and inclement weather.

Parking challenges are exacerbated on warm summer weekends when river rafters come to Bowness Park early in the morning, park their vehicles and leave them all day while floating down the Bow River. Parking is also impacted by large groups that reserve picnic sites for morning use but remain in the Park all day.

There are conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians throughout the Park because parking is located between major picnic and activity areas and the Bow River shoreline. Serious conflicts occur summer and winter at the parking area east of the Concession Building, or Pavilion, where pedestrians accessing the lagoon for boating in summer or skating in winter are obligated to negotiate parked cars between the Pavilion and the lagoon edge.

Finally, the Parks Maintenance Depot for the northwest quadrant of the City is located just north of the main entry bridge, causing congestion and safety concerns for both Park patrons and Parks Operations staff.

3.2 Facilities Issues

The deck of the bridge at the entry to Bowness Park needs to be replaced; the concrete and reinforcement steel are badly deteriorated. The City of Calgary Roads and Bridges is monitoring the bridge and have it on the life cycle replacement list.

The picnic shelters are in reasonable condition; however, the washroom buildings require upgrading. The concession building or Pavilion is reaching the end of its life cycle and requires refurbishment of building and equipment. Food concessions at Bowness Park should be reviewed, both in terms of food selection options and hours of operation.

Recreation facilities within the Park are in a deteriorated condition, some to the point that public safety is an issue. Of particular concern are the splash pool, the mini-train, mini-golf and some of the play equipment. The group fire pits need replacement, and additional individual barbecues have been requested.

Pathway continuity and connectivity throughout the Park is an issue. There is no designated regional pathway through the Park; pedestrians often use the road system in traversing the Park east to west. The foot path on the Bow River bank has no surfacing and becomes slippery and muddy during inclement weather.

3.3 Environmental Management Issues

Human use has badly eroded the Bow River bank along much of Bowness Park's length, particularly the centre and western sections. The top of the riverbank is compromised by a heavily worn and braided foot path which becomes muddy and unsafe during inclement weather. Safe access to the water's edge between the groynes would be a welcome addition, facilitating foot traffic from the Park and watercraft access from the Bow River.

The seasonally fluctuating water levels in the lagoon make access a challenge, particularly in winter conditions when water levels are lower. Fluctuating water levels complicate ice maintenance operations during the winter months. Repair and upgrading of control structures on the channel / lagoon system at the western tip of the Park and at 85th Street NW are necessary to improve the consistency of water levels in the lagoon.

The age and health of native tree stands is a concern. In the manicured sections of the Park general maintenance procedures have precluded natural regeneration of native stands of Black Cottonwood, Balsam Poplar and White Spruce, resulting in stands of uniformly old age class trees. While the health of most individual trees and stands is good, there is a high occurrence of natural heart wood rot in larger Black Cottonwood trees, and the White Spruce below the Stoney Trail Bridge have been impacted by altered light and moisture regimes and exposure to salt spray from ice / snow management on the bridge. Approximately 50% of this White Spruce stand is seriously compromised and are either dead or dying.

3.4 Policy Issues

Two areas of concern with existing operation policies have been identified:

- The allowing of river rafters to launch from Bowness Park, contributing to parking shortages and traffic congestion on busy days
- Reserving of group picnic sites by large groups, particularly on Saturday, Sunday and holiday Monday mornings in the summer, which limits accessibility for families and small groups and leads to over crowding and traffic congestion in afternoon and evening hours.

FIG.1 CONCERNS WITH NATURAL AND BUILT ELEMENTS

BOWNESS PARK

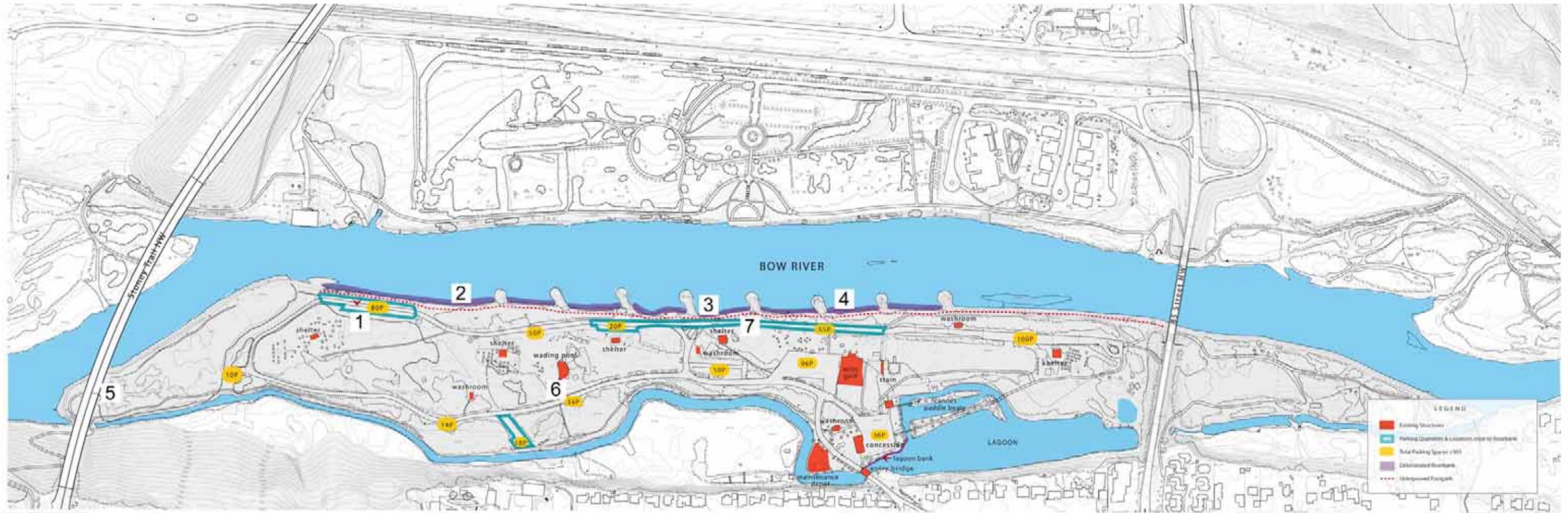


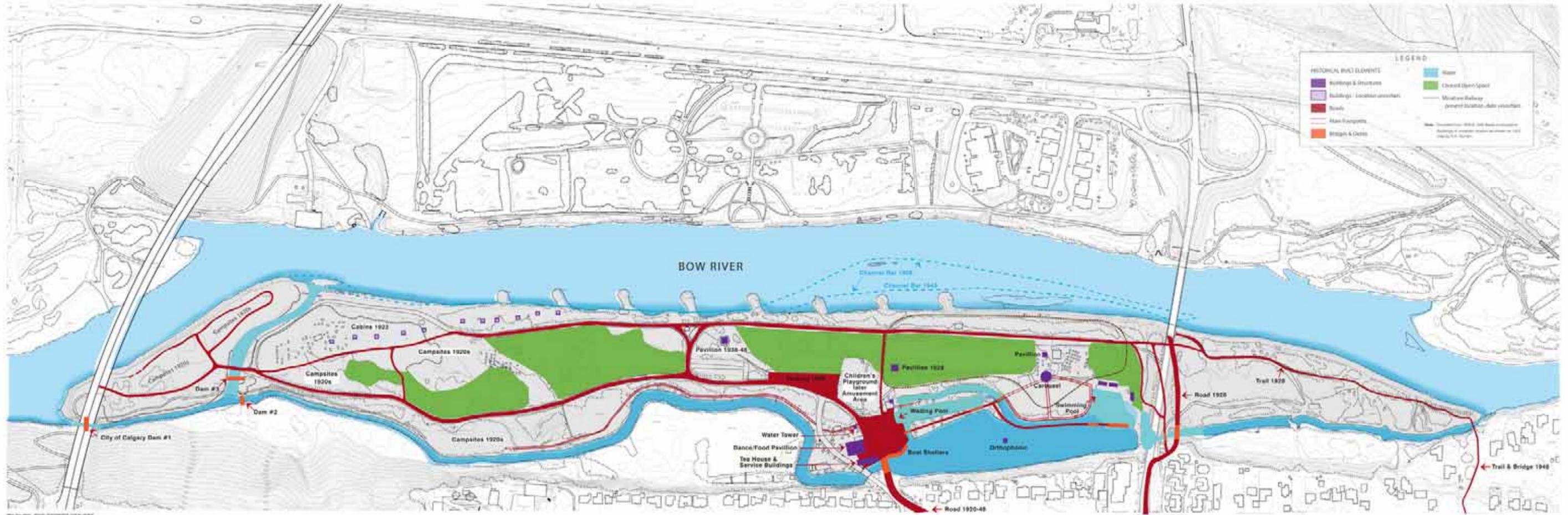
FIG.2 USE FACTOR ISSUES

BOWNESS PARK



FIG.3 HISTORIC ELEMENTS

BOWNESS PARK



4. INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

The Consulting Team, in collaboration with the City of Calgary Parks Project Manager, have undertaken a comprehensive inventory of Bowness Park, reviewing activities and attractions, all aspects of vehicular and pedestrian circulation, natural elements, historical elements, and various operational and functional factors. Information has been gathered from stakeholders within City administration and in the public realm, from concessionaires, and from the Bowness residents and the general public by way of interviews and public Open Houses held in the Bowness Community. The information has been carefully assessed and findings, including quantifiable public input, are presented in this section of the report.

4.1 Activities and Attractions

We will introduce this section by listing what public respondents liked most and least about Bowness Park. When asked the open ended question 'What do you like best about Bowness Park?' almost two thirds of respondents listed the natural setting of the Park. This preference was followed by skating on the Lagoon. In answer to the open ended question 'What are the most serious problems facing Bowness Park today?' over half of the respondents said vehicular congestion and overcrowding on summer weekends. The next most frequent response was with regard to the state of disrepair of facilities at Bowness Park.

Central Square

The Central Square is defined by the Concessions Pavilion on the west, the lagoon on the south and water channels to the east. It has an asphalt surface and currently serves as a parking lot for 36 cars. There is a row of picnic tables at the south end near the lagoon. On busy days, both summer and winter, there are constant conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians as they attempt to access the Concessions Pavilion. The nearest public washroom is west of the Concessions Pavilion and is a bit of a hike for little skaters and canoeists.

The picnic tables at the edge of the lagoon offer excellent views over the water to the parkland and escarpment beyond. Access to the lagoon is challenging, particularly in winter when temporary stairs must be installed due to the fact that water levels (and by inference ice levels) are 700 – 800mm lower in winter than in summer.

Assessment:

The Central Square would function much better as a pedestrian space, removing automobiles from the edge of the lagoon. Picnic tables should be added close to the lagoon and a fixed all-season edge should replace the soft bank of the lagoon. This will necessitate a consistent water level in the lagoon both summer and winter – to be discussed later in this report.

The Concession Pavilion is functional but is in need of refurbishment of the building envelope and equipment. The Pavilion should be refurbished to provide space for changing skates in winter and act as a warming place. The Pavilion should continue to have a food kiosk for snack foods and could house washrooms convenient to the Central Square and the lagoon.

Lagoon, Channels and Water Play

The lagoon and channels have retained much of their historic configuration and their historic use patterns. The canoes and paddle boats are very popular in the summer when the lagoon is at its full water level. Unfortunately, the water levels have to be lowered in the winter months because of clearance issues under the bridges, creating an unsightly, and at times, unsafe edge condition for the skating season. Skating is a big draw to Bowness Park during the winter months; approximately 75% of Open House respondents participate in ice skating at the Park.

Assessment:

The water levels in the lagoon and channels should be maintained at a consistent level both summer and winter if possible. A permanent stepped landing should be installed at the interface of the Central Square and the lagoon, providing safer access both summer and winter.



View looking east at Lagoon.

Water Spray Feature

The water spray feature in the centre west area of the Park is badly deteriorated. Some attendees at the public Open Houses questioned if it was safe for children to utilize.

Assessment:

The water play feature should be upgraded or replaced. Current water treatment and safety standards will need to be met.

Raft Launching on the Bow River

Bowness Park is a popular spot for launching canoes and rafts on the Bow River. The groynes along the shoreline create quiet water areas away from the main current of the river, making it a safe location for launching. However, river users park their vehicles in Bowness Park and then float down river, leaving their cars all day and exacerbating the parking congestion in the Park. Over 62% of respondents at the public Open Houses noted that parking in the Park associated with river rafting is problematic or seriously problematic. It was repeatedly suggested that boat and raft launching be relocated to the north side of the Bow River west of Baker Park.

Assessment:

Facilities for parking should be developed west of Baker Park for boat and raft users. Launching can safely occur at or near the existing ramp that Calgary EMS and Fire Department personnel currently use. Canoe and kayak training courses conducted by the Bow River Canoe Club and other groups can be accommodated on the south side of the Bow River amongst the groynes. If access for launching canoes and kayaks for training sessions is required at Bowness Park, it should be scheduled for mid-week and not during busy weekend periods.

Open Play fields

The open manicured play fields are one of the most loved amenities of Bowness Park. The configuration of the playfields has remained consistent since their development in the early 1920's. More than 95% of respondents at the public Open Houses expressed a desire to retain the play fields.

Assessment:

The play fields should remain in their current configuration. Minor improvements and rehabilitation should be implemented as necessary.



View of open grass areas and mature trees, west end of Bowness Park.

Picnic Sites

Family picnics have been a tradition at Bowness Park for decades. The Park is also a popular venue for large group gatherings and picnics. The picnic tables, for the most part, are tightly grouped in close proximity to the five picnic shelters. The compact alignment of tables is ideal for large groups but not as conducive to use by a variety of smaller groups or families.

The picnic shelters are variously constructed of wood and steel supports; all have matching metal roofs. There are play structures associated with three of the picnic groupings organized in a variety of configurations.

Assessment:

The five picnic shelters are in reasonable condition although some electrical upgrades may be required. The quantity of picnic tables should remain as is and while some should be more informally grouped near the picnic shelters, others could be distributed throughout the park. The individual barbeques are very popular and the number should be increased. The group picnic fire rings are in poor condition and should be replaced.

The play structures are in adequate condition. They are popular features and should be upgraded to current Parks standards as required.



Picnic shelter in Bowness Park.



View of firepit and picnic tables.

Miniature Train

The miniature train has an almost 50 year history in Bowness Park. The train is particularly popular with children and grandparents. The mini-train is not in good condition and is often out of operation because of need for repairs. The railway track is in poor condition and it has been suggested that it should be re-laid entirely. There is some question as to the ownership of the train whether it belongs to the City or the concessionaire. The railway track is owned by the City.

Assessment:

Ownership of the miniature train should be confirmed. The train and track will likely need to be replaced if they are to be a reliable feature in the Park. Corporate sponsorship or sponsorships by a railroad club should be investigated.

Food Services

The food services in Bowness Park are offered at the Concessions Pavilion. The choices range from sandwiches to snack foods to drinks (non-alcoholic). The majority of sales come from ice cream in the summer and hot chocolate and coffee in the winter. There are currently no opportunities for dining or purchasing a sit down meal in the Park. Comments at the public Open Houses suggest that a well-run café or restaurant would be a welcome addition to the Park.

The Concession Pavilion and the food preparation equipment are over 50 years old, although some renovations have been made over the years. There are no washroom facilities in the Concession Pavilion.

Assessment:

The Concession Pavilion and food preparation equipment are in need of refurbishment. Consistency in hours of operation for food services should be established and maintained. The addition of washrooms should be considered. Addition of a Tea House for dining will be discussed in a subsequent section of the report.

Miniature Golf and Midway Rides

The midway rides are in a state of disrepair and have not been operated for years. They are currently located inside a fenced compound that has an asphalt surface. Due to the fact that the rides have not been in operation in recent years, it is difficult to assess what the public usership would be if the rides were in operating condition. Comments at the public Open Houses noted that this type of attraction is available elsewhere.

The miniature golf facility is still in use but in a state of benign neglect. The various features do not drain properly and the facility has to be closed after a storm event. Based on comments at the public Open Houses, public support for retaining the mini-golf facility is low.

Assessment:

The midway rides at Bowness Park are beyond repair and would have to be replaced to maintain this type of attraction. As this type of recreation experience is offered commercially at other venues, an alternative option is to eliminate the amusement rides and reclaim the fenced area they occupy as parkland.

The miniature golf facility would have to be completely rebuilt to make it a viable attraction. Although there is limited public support for the retention of the attraction, an alternative option would be elimination of the facility and reassignment of the land base to other park uses.



Fenced area of former 'Funland' amusement rides.

4.2 Circulation

One of the most frequently expressed concerns at public Open Houses was traffic congestion, overcrowding, and parking challenges at Bowness Park on busy summer weekends. Nearly 75% of respondents listed automobile circulation and parking as problematic or seriously problematic. There were many comments about automobile/pedestrian conflicts in the Park, particularly related to access of the Bow River shoreline from picnic areas in the Park. To reach the River's edge from the play fields and picnic sites, a person must cross the roadway and often manoeuvre through parked cars.



West end parking adjacent to Bow River.



East end parking near Bow River bank.

Automobile Circulation and Parking

The vehicular road system at Bowness Park consists of the entry road off 48th Avenue NW, the bridge across the channel, access to central parking, a two-way road to the east end turn around and a one-way loop to the west end. The entry road and bridge form the only vehicular access into the Park. The deck of the entry bridge is badly deteriorated and is on the City of Calgary’s Capital Program for replacement in 2011.

Parking surfaces are a mixture of asphalt surfacing and red shale surfacing. The red shale surfacing can be messy during inclement weather. Approximately 560 parking stalls exist in Bowness Park. Over height concrete curbs line the roadways and parking areas – an attempt to prevent vehicles from encroaching on parklands. There is currently no secondary or emergency route into Bowness Park.

Assessment:

While the roadway network and parking is adequate for use in winter and on weekdays during the summer, the system functionally fails on summer weekends and Holiday Mondays. Traffic becomes gridlocked, cars double park and encroach upon parkland, and the park experience is negatively impacted for all users. The automobile overpowers the peaceful natural setting of Bowness Park, severely impacting the resources that draw patrons to the Park.



Vehicle congestion on warm summer days.

Several options to mitigate the dominance of the automobile in the Park have been discussed, including:

- Relocate boat and raft launching to the north side of the Bow River
- Make Bowness Park an automobile – free zone
- Restrict vehicle access on summer weekends and holidays.
- Reorganize the road system and add additional parking spaces
- Centralize parking and make large sections of Bowness Park into pedestrian zones.
- Create a complimentary shuttle system that would bring Park patrons from the under utilized parking lots in Baker Park to Bowness Park and return them to their cars.
- Add a pedestrian bridge linking Bowness Park to Baker Park midway between 85th Street NW and Stoney Trail NW (This option is projected for the 25 plus year timeline).

After careful analysis and consideration, current thinking suggests multiple options working in tandem will provide the best long term results for automobile circulation and parking in Bowness Park. Informal boat and raft launching activities should be relocated to an area immediately east of the Stoney Trail bridge on the north side of the Bow River. Parking should be consolidated in the central section of the Park, with existing roadways converted to pedestrian circulation routes. A recreational open air shuttle should be operated on busy summer and holiday weekends to relieve parking pressure and congestion at Bowness Park and take advantage of under-utilized parking at Baker Park. The electric-powered, rubber-tired shuttle could utilize the regional pathway to convey Park patrons from the north side of the Bow River to the south side. In the 25 plus year horizon, demographics may dictate addition of a pedestrian bridge linking Baker Park with Bowness Park.

The Consulting Team and Project Manager were concerned that limiting parking to the central section of the Park might not be acceptable to Park users; however, over 78% of respondents at the public Open Houses agreed with the proposal, approximately 15% disagreed and 7% did not comment. Other stakeholders have also endorsed the concept.

The bridge deck on the main entry road should be raised by approximately one metre when it is replaced to facilitate ice maintenance. Auto lanes should remain as they are but the bridge deck should be widened to accommodate pedestrian traffic on both sides.

Pedestrian Circulation

In spite of congestion and conflicts with automobiles, the activity most often participated in at Bowness Park is walking (93% of Open House respondents). A network of asphalt pathways and foot paths accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the Park, although a pathway that meets regional pathway standards does not currently exist in the Park. The foot paths at the edge of the Bow River and adjacent to the channel do not have fixed surfaces and can be impassable and dangerous during inclement weather. Park patrons often use the vehicular roadways for pedestrian movement because of the condition of the footpaths.

Assessment:

A regional pathway should be constructed through Bowness Park, using for the most part, reassigned vehicular roadways. The regional pathway should have a paved asphalt surface and should be of sufficient width for emergency vehicle and police surveillance use. By arrangement the regional pathway system could also be used to convey senior citizens and persons with special needs to the picnic sites and other amenities furthest from the parking facilities.

Footpaths at the edge of the Bow River and adjacent to the channel should be formalized and surfaced with a crushed gravel or rock material, making them passable in all weather conditions.



Dirt foot path at edge of Bow River bank.

4.3 Natural Elements

The natural forest areas and the water's edge at the Bow River and at the channel / lagoon system are much loved features in Bowness Park. Two out of every three respondents at the public Open Houses listed the natural setting as what they liked most about Bowness Park. The least developed areas at the west end of the Park at east of 85th Street NW are especially loved as nature preserves.

Shorelines

The Bow River bank is badly eroded where not armoured, due mostly to foot traffic of Park users. The footpaths discussed in the previous section are in places an extension of this eroded condition. The stretches of river bank between the groynes are in very poor condition and are aesthetically degraded, with exposed roots of trees, precipitous slopes and potentially dangerous situations.

The bank of the channel leading to the lagoon is generally in better condition. There is some braiding of footpaths caused by repeated detours around muddy areas.

Assessment:

The Bow River banks between the groynes should be stabilized by a combination of rock armouring and bio-remediation. Native trees and shrubs should be introduced at the top of bank and encouraged to naturalize the rock armouring. Safe access to the water's edge should be directed by a series of stone steps installed on the downstream side of the groynes. Upstream and downstream of the groynes the existing gravel bars should be augmented to provide safe access to the river's edge.

The shoreline of the channel and lagoon should be enhanced by maintaining a consistent water level throughout the seasons. This should greatly reduce erosion and damage to the shoreline. A permanent stepped access to the lagoon edge at the Central Square, previously discussed in this report, will also help with bank stabilization.



Eroded bank of Bow River.



Eroded bank between groynes.

Native Stands of Trees

The health of native trees in the Park – Black Cottonwood, Balsam Poplar and White Spruce – is generally good, both for most individual trees and for stands of trees. Natural insect, disease and fungus conditions were observed throughout the Park, but these are considered normal and there are no specific problematic outbreaks. The one exception is the stand of White Spruce located below the Stoney Trail bridge, where upwards of 50% of the individual Spruce trees are dead or dying, probably due to changes in light and moisture regimes and to increased exposure to salt spray from ice/snow management on the Stoney Trail bridge.

In areas of the Park where the grass is not heavily mowed, some natural regeneration of native tree species is occurring. In most areas, however, and especially in heavily mowed areas, individual trees are mostly in the older age class with few or none in the young and middle age classes. Larger individuals have natural heart wood rot. With all the trees being in the older age class, the stands are not being sustained into the future.

The stands of old age trees, as well as the Spruce stand below the Stoney Trail bridge, present a significant public safety hazard – especially during high wind events. The semi-native stands of trees where the grass is not mowed exhibit understory that is becoming infested by aggressive invasive species such as smooth brome and Canada thistle. For more in depth information please refer to the “Bowness Park Forest Stand Assessment” prepared by Kestrel Research Incorporated and appended to this report.

Assessment:

The native tree stands are critical to the natural character of Bowness Park. All future planting should be of native tree species: Black Cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*), Balsam Poplar (*Populus balsamifera*), and White Spruce (*Picea glauca*). Transplantable species of non-native trees such as Bur Oak, Green Ash, Paper Birch, Mountain Ash, etc. should be relocated to other park venues.

A management plan should be developed for each of the major stands of native trees in Bowness Park. As identified by Kestrel Research Incorporated there are four major stands within the Park and three on adjacent floodplain and escarpment lands to the south. The stand management plans should focus on diversifying the age classes of the stand and on reducing risk to the public from individual trees in old age class and in the stand below the Stoney Trail bridge that are subject to wind throw. Stand management plans should include a noxious weed program to mitigate infestations of invasive species such as smooth brome and Canada thistle.

To facilitate the goal of diversifying age classes in native stands, a naturalization process for stands of trees adjacent to the Bow River and in the western section of the Park should be implemented. Young age class native trees should be planted, understory shrubs and grasses should be added and mowing of these areas should be done only for fire management purposes. Pathways and picnic sites should be allowed within the naturalization areas.

4.4 Historic Elements

Historic Significance and Heritage Value

Characteristics of Bowness Park that are significant to its heritage value begin with the century-old and continuing tradition of family recreation in the natural riverside setting that is perceived as a retreat from the rigors of the city. The recreational opportunities and experiences are inherent in the natural qualities of the site and in the overlaying of constructed attractions. This section contains an overview of historic elements in Bowness Park, both existing features and those that have been removed over the years. A detailed review of historic elements can be found in the Appendices.

While Bowness Park has regional and citywide status in the Parks system, it is particularly cherished by the Bowness community as a key element of its history. Residents of Bowness and throughout the City are exceptionally nostalgic about the Park's features and their experiences there.

Historic figures associated with Bowness Park begin with entrepreneur/founder John Hextall. William Reader, the pioneering superintendent of Calgary Parks who greatly influenced the formative character of the Calgary public landscape, assisted in directing the initial development of the Park. Reference is also made to the involvement of the famous landscape architect, Thomas Mawson, who advised of the site's potential in his overall recommendations for planning the City.

Character Defining Elements

Elements defining the historical character of the Park include the riverine forest environment, the structural layout of developed open spaces and water features, roads and recreational facility sites, all of which remain essentially as they were since the earliest period of park development.

The most significant change to the character of the Park has been the removal of man-made amusements and the transition to greater interest in activities based on the natural features, especially picnicking and walking in summer and skating in winter.

Riverine Forest

Native forest of Balsam Poplar, Black Cottonwood and White Spruce trees; understory riverine shrub association with dominant willow and dogwood; groundcover of forbs and grasses. See Assessment in Section 4.3 – Natural Elements/Native Stands of Trees.

Bow River Bank

Average water level of the Bow River is about one metre below adjoining land, subject to flooding; fluvial gravel river bank bars have been continually re-forming with deposition and erosion, gravel “beaches” have formed near the west and east ends; rock facing and a series of groynes have been placed to resist erosion. See Assessment in Section 4.3 – Natural Elements/Shorelines.

Lagoon on the Inner Channel

Inner channel water flows are controlled by structures at the upstream and downstream (85th St.). The lagoon was formed by widening the downstream portion near 85th St.; a complex of dikes, channels and basins parallel the north side, with foot bridges connecting the island dikes. See Assessment in Section 4.1 – Activities and Attractions/Lagoon, Channels and Waterplay.

Open Lawn Spaces

The forest was selectively cleared for activity fields in various sizes and places at the outset of developing the Park; lawns have been planted and maintained in these spaces. Historical functions of the open field spaces including horse racing and organized team sports have been replaced by unstructured play. See Assessment in Section 4.1 – Activities and Attractions/Open Playfields.

Roadway Access Patterns

The roadway layout remains exactly as original except for the realignment of the bridge and a shift toward the river of the westbound section of the west loop. The roadways have been widened and resurfaced with pavement; additional parking spaces have been constructed at the centre and along the outer roads roughly tripling the early number of parked vehicles. The original, historic access to the Park by street railway was discontinued in 1950. See Assessment in Section 4.2 – Circulation/Automobile Circulation and Parking.

Central Arrival and Social Square

The original gravel yard is now a paved parking lot with awkward access from the realigned entrance roadway. The original pavilion, a Dance Hall, was in the same location as the current pavilion on the west side of the square. A rustic tea room, removed, with a veranda was attached to the pavilion on the edge of the lagoon. The original main boat landing, a canopied wood structure on the southeast corner of the square, was removed. A flagpole with “Hollywood” searchlights, centered in the square, has been replaced with a flagpole at the east side. See Assessment in Section 4.1 – Activities and Attractions/Central Square.



Former canoe rental facility at Bowness Park.



Former pavilion at Bowness Park.

Rides and Amusement Attractions

Rides and amusements historically comprised a substantial and characteristic area of interest at the Park. The elements no longer existing at the Park include:

- The carousel, centered in the east part of the Park, was removed to Heritage Park.
- The location of the midway rides/games north of the central square is marked by fences and a concrete pad, others along with a “fun” food outlet were associated with the carousel; one rocket ship piece remains, unused and dilapidated.
- Dance hall, as in the discussion of the pavilion above.

Elements remaining in the Park include:

- The miniature train with ride-on engine and passenger cars is a replacement of the original model supplied to the Park in 1960. The railway track circuits the east end of the Park.
- While golf is referred to in early accounts of the Park, the history of the existing miniature golf course is uncertain.

For Assessment of the miniature train, miniature golf and midway rides see Section 4.1 – Activities and Attractions.

Landmark Ornaments on the Lagoon

The 'Orthophonic' device that played recorded music, housed in a gabled wood structure, was located in the centre of the lagoon; near it to the west was a choreographed fountain with coloured lights. The 'Orthophonic' structure was removed and recorded music is now played from a sound system located in the service building. The choreographed fountain was replaced with a floating fountain.

Assessment:

The 'Orthophonic' structure should be reconstructed as a celebration of a former era in the history of Bowness Park. The floating fountain should remain as a sustainable reinterpretation of the original fountain.



Former 'Orthophonic' structure at Bowness Park Lagoon.

Elements Distinctive to the Early History of the Park

Elements that no longer exist, which figured prominently in the early history of Bowness Park include:

Access by streetcar: The Calgary Municipal Railway originally operated the Park at the terminus of the streetcar line.

Swimming pool: A main basin at the east end of the lagoon provided for swimming in the river water. A children's wading pool was in an enclosed area of the constructed channels. Swimming facilities were substantial and included changing houses, wooden sun decks and diving platform. Swimming was shut down as a result of a drowning and health concerns, finally in 1959.

Camping: Campsites accessible by car and located in the west end indicate the remote wilderness character of the early Park.

Cabins: A series of 11 cabins for rent were located along the westerly river front.

Assessment:

These distinctive elements which figured importantly in the early history of Bowness Park no longer fit current use patterns or City of Calgary Parks mandate. These elements should be highlighted as part of an interpretive program of Park history.

Recognition

Although not of world scale significance, Bowness Park, in the language of international interest in heritage sites, would meet with the definition of a Cultural Landscape: "cultural landscapes represent the combined works of nature and of man...they are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both internal and external."

The natural environment of Bowness Park has been adapted for human use over time and the activities and features there express the values and social lives of the people who have made and used it.

Bowness Park is one of Calgary's oldest parks and is listed on Calgary's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. It has been recognized as a historic place to be conserved and also to ensure that it will be enjoyed by visitors today and into the future.

4.5 Functional Factors

Parks of the size and complexity of Bowness Park have operational issues that the average park patron might not recognize. We have called these functional factors, and while the general public may not be aware of them, they are nonetheless critical to the successful operation of the Park.

Washrooms

There are four washroom buildings in Bowness Park with running water and flush toilets. Some of the washroom buildings are open on a seasonal basis only. The facility nearest the pavilion and lagoon is heated and open year round.

Assessment:

The washroom buildings are in reasonable condition and the majority of people responding at Open Houses find the service adequate. Parks Operations personnel are aware of upgrades required to the washroom buildings and fixtures. As noted in a previous section of the report, it is suggested that washrooms be added to a refurbished Pavilion at the Central Square.

Alternate Emergency Access Route

Currently the main entrance and bridge provide the only vehicular access into and out of Bowness Park. This is unacceptable to EMS and Fire Department personnel. If the main entry were blocked because of an accident or other occurrence, emergency vehicles would be unable to access the Park.

Assessment:

An alternative access route for police and emergency vehicles has been identified on the east side of 85th Street NW, passing under the 85th Street bridge and connecting to the pathway network in the central zone of the Park. An existing road bed was evident over much of the route. This routing should also accommodate the regional pathway connection to Bowness Park.

Channel Control Structures

The channel inlet control structure at the western tip of the Park is no longer functioning properly. Water leaks this past winter (2008-2009) interfered with ice surfacing on the channel and lagoon. The outlet structure under 85th Street NW is in poor condition and not of adequate size. Parks operation personnel go to extraordinary effort each fall to keep it from plugging with leaves.

Assessment:

Both the channel inlet structure and the outlet structure should be rebuilt to allow Parks Operations personnel to properly manage and maintain water levels in the lagoon and to drain the lagoon as needed for maintenance procedures.

Maintenance Depot

The Parks Maintenance Depot adjacent to the main entry to Bowness Park creates congestion for Park patrons, circulation conflicts for Parks Operations personnel, and a less than desirable first impression of the Park. The depot is also immediately adjacent to the channel upstream from the lagoon and poses a potential environmental risk because of equipment, materials and fuel stored there.

Assessment:

The Maintenance Depot should be moved out of Bowness Park and the land adjacent to the channel reclaimed as park land. A modest maintenance building the size of a two car garage and a small fenced yard should be installed north of the existing Parks Operations building with easy access to the lagoon channels for ice maintenance.



Parks maintenance facility at entrance to Bowness Park.

Pedestrian Bridges

The pedestrian bridges east of the Concession Pavilion are narrow and provide insufficient clearance for ice maintenance equipment and skaters.

Assessment:

The decks of the pedestrian bridges should be raised and widened to provide access for service vehicles to the dyke for service of light standards. The deck structures should provide clearance for ice maintenance equipment and for skaters wishing to skate on the northern channels and basins.

5. REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overall Program

Bowness Park is loved for its natural attractions including the riverside setting, the mature stands of trees interplayed with expanses of manicured grass, and the wilderness quality of relatively untouched forests at the east and west ends of the Park. It is also loved for its recreational attractions such as the channel and lagoon, summer boating and winter skating, picnic sites and group gatherings, and other amenities. The Park is heavily used and is in danger of being “loved to death” as many of its finest features, both natural and built, are deteriorating.

The Redevelopment Plan proposed for Bowness Park and presented in this section is purposed with reversing the decline of the natural amenities of the Park, refurbishment and redevelopment of the selected built features, and making the Park capable of meeting the recreation aspirations of Calgarians over the coming decades.

Conceptual design of the Central Square, the lagoon and channels, circulation through the Park (pedestrian and vehicular), the picnic groupings, natural features and historic features have been carefully considered and included in the Bowness Park Redevelopment Plan. Refer to the Figure 1 – Bowness Park Conceptual Redevelopment Plan for a graphic representation of features discussed in this section of the report.

5.2 Activities and Attractions

Central Square

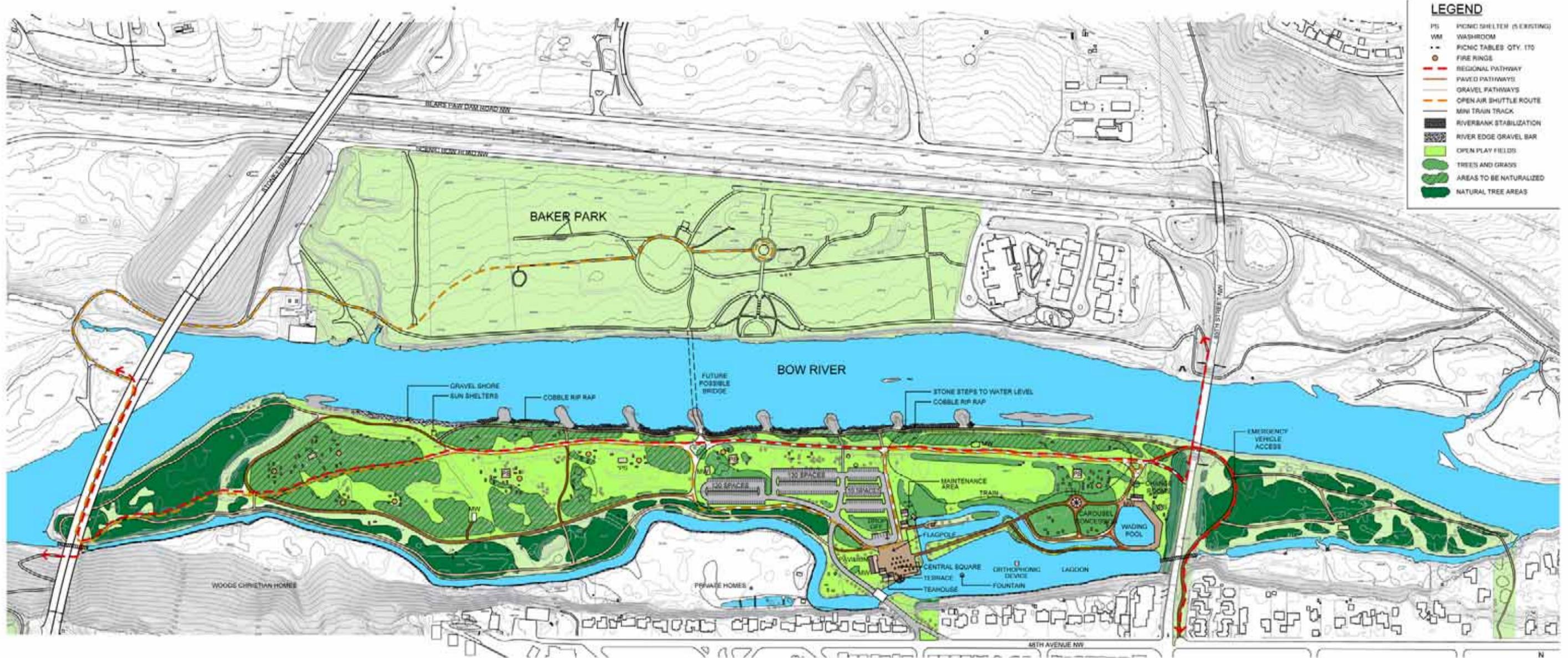
The Central Square will be developed as the hub for Park activity and will be the primary access point to the lagoon for both summer and winter activities. Visitors will have the opportunity to rent canoes or paddle boats, put on their skates, warm up with a hot chocolate, or enjoy a full meal.

The Central Square is envisioned as a pedestrian space with adjacent drop-off area and parking for handicapped patrons. The space will be filled with benches, tables and chairs. Permanent stepped decking will be constructed at the lagoon’s edge, providing safe and easy access both summer and winter. The historic flagpole will be reinstated prominently in the Central Square.

The Tea House, an historic feature, will be reinterpreted as a venue for casual dining, positioned to capture panoramic views of the lagoon and surrounding parkland. The existing Concessions Pavilion will be refurbished and adapted with washroom facilities, a warming space in winter and a food kiosk to serve snacks such as ice cream and hot chocolate in their respective seasons.

FIG.4 CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

BOWNESS PARK



LEGEND

- PS PICNIC SHELTER (5 EXISTING)
- WM WASHROOM
- PICNIC TABLES QTY. 170
- FIRE RINGS
- REGIONAL PATHWAY
- PAVED PATHWAYS
- GRAVEL PATHWAYS
- OPEN AIR SHUTTLE ROUTE
- MHI TRAIN TRACK
- RIVERBANK STABILIZATION
- RIVER EDGE GRAVEL BAR
- OPEN PLAY FIELDS
- TREES AND GRASS
- AREAS TO BE NATURALIZED
- NATURAL TREE AREAS



LAGOON



AUTOMOBILE CONGESTION



DIRT PATH



HISTORIC ORTHOPHONIC DEVICE AND FOUNTAIN



LAKE LOUISE RIVER BANK



HISTORIC LAGOON

Lagoon and Channels

The lagoon and channels will remain essentially as they exist today, which is very similar to their historic configuration. A permanent stepped deck will be constructed at the interface of the lagoon with the Central Square and slopes will be stabilized where necessary. Water levels will remain consistent throughout the year which will enhance the aesthetics of the lagoon year round. The traditions of boating and skating activities will continue in their respective seasons.

The historic orthophonic device will be recreated to celebrate an earlier era in the history of the Park. A judicious mix of music will be projected over the lagoon and into the Park. The fountain feature in the lagoon will be retained.

Wading Pool

The historic swimming facility, originally located at the east end of the lagoon, will be reinterpreted as a contemporary wading pool. To comply with current regulations for body contact water recreation, the water from the lagoon cannot be used in the wading pool. The two amenities will be separated by a dyke similar to the historical one and a strong co-relation between the two water activity amenities will be created. Unlike its predecessor the wading pool will have a fixed bottom and will meet current standards for filtration, recirculation and water quality. Two sides of the wading pool will feature a sunning deck adjacent to grassy areas with picnic tables. Washroom facilities will be constructed to complement the wading pool and serve the east end of the Park.

The possibilities of using the wading pool in winter as a venue for beginning skaters will be investigated.

Raft Launching on the Bow River

Informal boat and raft launching will be relocated to the north side of the Bow River. Launching of canoes and kayaks for formal instruction that occurs between the groynes will be accommodated from Bowness Park, particularly during off-peak periods such as mid-week.

Open Playfields

The open playfields will remain as they currently exist and the grass will continue to be irrigated and mowed. The playfields were established early in the Park's history; by 1923 these areas were configured very much as we see them today.

Picnic Sites

Picnicking as an activity for families and for larger groups will continue as an important focus in Bowness Park. The intent of the Redevelopment Plan is to maintain the current number of picnic tables, approximately 200, but redistribute them more informally within the Park. It is recommended that development of group picnic sites be considered for Baker Park to help reduce the pressure on group facilities at Bowness Park.

The picnic tables are currently regimented in rows in close proximity to the 5 picnic shelters. A large number of tables will remain adjacent to the shelters but will be arranged less formally. Other tables will be located throughout the Park to accommodate smaller groups and families. The number of small barbeques will be increased. The fire rings associated with the picnic shelters will be replaced.

Play Structures

The play structures associated with three of the picnic shelters will be refurbished and upgraded to current standards. Swings and slides and other types of traditional play equipment matching the historical character of Bowness Park will be emphasized for these sites.

Miniature Train

The miniature train will remain in its current general location. The track will be re-laid as a large loop with one leg running at the edge of the large playfield and through the trees and the other leg following the Bow River bank, capturing views up and down the river. The miniature train will probably have to be replaced; sponsorships by a railway company or a train club will be sought.

Food Services

As discussed previously food services will be offered primarily at the Central Square, with choices for snack foods at the refurbished Pavilion or casual dining at the reinterpreted Tea House.

A seasonal food kiosk is proposed in the location that once housed the historic carousel, now located at Heritage Park. This location is in the eastern section of the Park close to the wading pool and is easily accessible from the regional pathway nearby.

5.3 Circulation

Automobile Circulation and Parking

Vehicular circulation in the Park will be simplified by consolidating parking in the central part of the Park. The entry road will remain as is, crossing the channel on a raised and refurbished bridge deck and leading to a single decision making point. A right turn will lead to the drop off zone and handicapped parking adjacent to the Central Square, straight ahead or a left turn will lead to centralized parking. Approximately 365 stalls will be provided in a series of new and existing parking lots. Parking patterns will be monitored and if need be, parking can be expanded to the east.

On busy summer weekends overflow parking will be directed to Baker Park and an open air shuttle will transport visitors over the Stoney Trail pedestrian bridge, circulate through Bowness Park, and allow visitors to disembark at a variety of stops within the Park. The shuttle is envisioned as a rubber tire, electric powered tram for quiet and environmentally friendly operation.

Pedestrian Circulation

The existing roadways will be converted to pedestrian and cycle pathways, forming a regional and secondary pathway network for circulation throughout the Park. Parking spaces along the former roadway alignments, particularly those in close proximity to the Bow River, will be reclaimed as parkland. To complete the regional pathway through the Park a new section will be constructed east of 85th Street and a new section will be added at the west end of the Park connecting to the pedestrian bridge under Stoney Trail. The regional pathway in conjunction with those on former roadways will be used for emergency vehicle access and, by arrangement, for transporting senior citizens and persons with disabilities to the more remote parts of the Park.

The regional and secondary pathways will have paved asphalt surfaces and will access all areas of the Park. The footpaths along the bank of the Bow River, adjacent to the channel, and in the natural areas at the east and west ends of the Park will be upgraded to a compacted gravel standard, making them passable in all types of weather. Snow removal operations will not include the footpaths.

It is anticipated that as the City of Calgary grows geographically and in population an additional pedestrian bridge from Bowness Park to Baker Park may be desirable. The long term planning (25 plus years) for this bridge indicates a location approximately midway between the existing pedestrian crossings at Stoney Trail and at 85th Street NW. The proposed location ties into the regional pathway networks in both Bowness Park and Baker Park.

5.4 Natural Elements

The natural elements of Bowness Park continue to be some of the most cherished attributes in the Park. The Redevelopment Plan stresses conservation, regeneration and enhancement of the natural elements, ensuring that such attributes as the Bow River bank, the lagoon and channels, and the impressive stands of native trees can be enjoyed by future generations of Calgarians.

Shorelines

The Bow River bank will be armoured with cobble rip rap between the groynes where it is badly eroded. Bio-remediation with native trees and shrubs will be undertaken at the top of the bank to naturalize the shoreline. A series of stone steps will be installed to direct safe access to the water's edge. The gravel bar upstream of the groynes will be extended to provide interface with shallow currents in this location.

The shorelines of the lagoon and channels will be enhanced by maintaining a consistent water level summer and winter.

Native Tree Stands

Considerable attention will be focused on regenerating and enhancing the native tree stands of Black Cottonwood, Balsam Poplar and White Spruce. Selective removal of non-native species will be undertaken to enhance the integrity of the native tree stands. New plantings of the native tree species will be installed in natural groupings to improve the age class diversification within the tree stands.

Stand management plans will be developed for each of the major stands in the Park. Management plans will focus on age diversification, reducing risk to the public from old trees falling or being blown down, and on mitigation programs for infestations of noxious weeds such as smooth brome and Canada thistle. The less disturbed stands of native trees at the west end of the Park and east of 85th St. NW will be conserved in their current state.

A naturalization process for stands of trees adjacent to the Bow River and in the western section of the Park will be implemented. Mowing programs will be curtailed in these tree stands and native understory shrubs and grasses will be replanted. Methods for stimulating regeneration of native tree species will be examined and experimental methods may be applied in specific areas.

5.5 Historic Elements

Bowness Park is one of Calgary's oldest parks and is listed on the City's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. Acknowledging the historic significance of the Park is important, and the Redevelopment Plan celebrates the Park's history in balance with contemporary use patterns. The Redevelopment Plan proposes the restoration of deteriorating features including the lagoon, Central Square and miniature train. Re-creation of missing elements will be limited to the "Orthophonic" structure in the centre of the lagoon. Missing elements that will be reinterpreted include the Tea House, the carousel location, wading pool, and cabins and camping areas. A series of interpretive panels will tell the story of how Bowness Park has evolved over time to become the Park we know and love today.

"Orthophonic" Device

The "Orthophonic" device, an early electronic system for playing recorded music, was housed in a gabled structure located in the centre of the lagoon. This historic structure, with updated sound equipment, will be re-created and positioned in its historic location, adding nostalgic charm and a carefully selected music mix to the lagoon for both summer and winter recreational activities.

Tea House

The reinterpretation of the historic Tea House will bring casual dining opportunities to Bowness Park. The Tea House will be built overlooking the Central Square and lagoon, commanding great views of the water and surrounding parkland.

Carousel Kiosk

This seasonal kiosk for snack food service and refreshments will mark the location of the historic carousel, which has been moved to Heritage Park. The Carousel Kiosk will serve the east end of the Park as noted in Section 5.2 - Activities and Attractions.

Wading Pool

The reinterpretation of the historic channel – fed swimming facility will be a contemporary wading pool as discussed in Section 5.2 – Activities and Attractions. The size and shape of the wading pool will reference its historical predecessor.

Cabins and Campsites

The eleven original cabins and the various campsites that once occupied the western section of the Park will be reinterpreted as family picnic sites and viewing areas. Shelters and interpretive panels will evoke the image of the original summer cabins and campsites, adding their story to Park amenities.

Interpretive Program

Stories throughout the Park will be told on interpretive panels designed to evoke the character of historic Bowness Park.

5.6 Functional Factors

Recommendations related to the functional factors of park operations and public safety at Bowness Park include the following:

- Two washroom facilities will be added at Bowness Park, an all season heated facility in the refurbished Pavilion at the Central Square and a seasonal facility at the wading pool.
- An alternate Emergency Access Route will be built on the east side of 85th St. NW and connecting under the 85th St. bridge to the central section of the Park. The Emergency Access Route will also serve as the regional pathway connection to 48th Avenue NW.
- Channel Control Structures – The inlet control structure for the channel at the western tip of Bowness Park and the drainage structure under 85th St NW will be rebuilt so that water levels in the lagoon can be maintained at the same level in summer and winter.
- The Parks Maintenance Depot will be relocated from the entry to Bowness Park and the land reclaimed as parkland. A modest sized maintenance building and small fenced yard will be installed north of the existing Parks Operations building to house ice making equipment and facilitate ice maintenance operations.
- The decks of pedestrian bridges over the northern channels will be widened to allow access for maintenance vehicles to the light and sound equipment on the dyke and raised to increase headroom for ice maintenance equipment and skating activities.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND COST ESTIMATES

An implementation strategy and order of magnitude cost estimates have been prepared for the redevelopment of Bowness Park. It should be noted that the redevelopment plan is conceptual and that cost estimates are preliminary, commensurate with the level of design detail. Given the conceptual nature of the redevelopment plans, the following estimates should be viewed as budget figures.

As detailed design of the various park elements progresses, some adjustments may be required within the overall park budget. Costs estimates are presented in a prioritized order that reflects the implementation strategy.

Priorities are organized into three broad categories:

- Elements required immediately to ensure the public safety and operational viability of Bowness Park.
- Elements required to sustain the current levels of use in the Park and ensure that natural and built amenities are maintained and are available to Calgarians.
- Elements that will greatly enhance the enjoyment of Bowness Park by Calgarians, honour the Park’s storied past and its unique place in Calgary’s parks system, and secure the Park’s enduring popularity into its second century of service.

Redevelopment of some of the Park elements will need to occur sequentially, but it is anticipated that much of the work will be undertaken concurrently, depending on budget availability.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY PARK ELEMENTS	\$ 1,390,000.00
PARK ELEMENTS TO SUSTAIN AND MAINTAIN	\$ 4,812,000.00
PARK ELEMENTS TO ENHANCE	\$ 4,084,000.00
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN BUDGET	\$10,286,000.00

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APPENDIX 1

BOWNESS PARK TIMELINE

BOWNESS PARK TIMELINE

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Bowness Park is an island in the Bow River in the northwest corner of the Community of Bowness. The Park was created by developer John Hextall as a nature retreat and pleasure resort in the early 1900's. As further developed and operated by the City of Calgary, it has continued to be a cherished, traditional place of family recreation.

1908 – 1911

John Hextall purchases Bowness Ranche, promotes access by streetcar to two islands in Bow river and dedicates them as a public park, as part of his planned suburb, Bowness Estates.

1911

The two islands and the bridge are transferred to the City.

1914 – 1918

The first improvements at the park are an impoundment of the small river channel as a lagoon for boating and swimming, clearing of areas of the riverine forest for sports and picnics, development of a bridge and basic roads, shelters, refreshment booths, and playground equipment. The former ranch structures were removed in 1914 – 15.

1917

Management of the park is transferred to the Calgary Municipal Railway.

1919 – 1923

New and more elaborate features are added to the popular Park:

- The carousel
- A new swimming pool with bathhouses, diving tower and slide
- More boating features including 24 new canoes, footbridges and docks
- A dance pavilion with a band organ and refreshment booth
- An elegant tea house with a terrace on the channel
- More picnic pavilions
- Eight small rental cabins
- Campsites
- A golf course office
- Parking lots, central and east
- A central flagpole and spotlights

A comprehensive map drawn by K.H. Gordon in 1923 illustrates these elements.

1928

The electric "Orthophonic" music player and lighted fountain are placed in the lagoon.

1930

The dance pavilion is enlarged with a fancy dining room and new refreshment stands are set up at the carousel and swimming pool.

1931

The miniature golf course is opened.

1931

The Bow River flood damages the road, the dance pavilion and the swimming pool. All are rebuilt.

1946

The cabins are removed.

1950

Streetcar service to Bowness ends, buses take over.

1958

A new concession building and entrance bridge are built.

1959

The swimming pool is permanently closed.

1960

The miniature railway is installed. New washrooms are added.

1961

Calgary Transit officially turns over control of the Park to Calgary Parks.
The Orthophonic is removed.

1964

The swimming pool is filled in.

1965

The fountain is removed.

1967

Children's midway rides are relocated to Bowness Park from the Zoo.

1969

The carousel is moved to Heritage Park.

1970

Bowness Park continues to be extremely popular, but is challenged with problems of over use and deterioration of the park, increasing night time rowdiness and vandalism. More parking is added through the 1970s along with the donation of the splash pool in 1975.

1982

Citizens and Council cannot agree on proposed improvement plans.

At present, while the river front and forest as well as some of the basic created elements of the park – the water features like the lagoon and the roadways – remain in their original locations, their forms have changed over time and nearly all of the other historic pieces, including the old buildings and built amusements, are gone.

APPENDIX 2

HISTORIC ELEMENTS AT BOWNESS PARK

str Elements at Bowness Park

Historic Significance and Heritage Value

Characteristics of Bowness Park that are significant to its heritage value begin with the century-old and continuing tradition of family recreation in the natural riverside setting that is perceived as a retreat from the rigors of the city. The recreational opportunities and experiences are inherent in the natural qualities of the site and in the overlaying of constructed amusements and attractions.

While it is a Park having regional and citywide status in the Parks system, it is particularly cherished by the Bowness community as a key element of its history. People of Bowness and throughout the City are exceptionally nostalgic about the Park's features and their experiences there.

Historic figures associated with Bowness Park begin with entrepreneur/founder John Hextall. William Reader, the pioneering superintendent of Calgary Parks who greatly influenced the formative character of the Calgary public landscape, assisted in directing the initial development of the Park. Reference is also made to the involvement of the famous landscape architect, Thomas Mawson, who advised of the site's potential in his overall recommendations for planning the City.

Character Defining Elements

Elements defining the historical character of the Park include:

Overall, Main Components of the Park: the riverine forest environment, the structural layout of developed open spaces and water features, roads and recreational facility sites remain essentially as they were since the earliest period of park development.

The most significant change to the character of the Park has been the removal of man-made amusements and the transition to greater interest in activities based on the natural features, especially picnicking and walking in summer and skating in winter.

Riverine Forest

Elements:

Native forest of Balsam Poplar, Black Cottonwood and White Spruce trees; understory riverine shrub association with dominant willow and dogwood; groundcover of forbs and grasses.

Image:

Deciduous trees in natural groves, canopy forming partial shade, winter patterns; shrubs cleared to sparse thickets yielding open understory.

Authenticity:

With poplars having a relatively short lifespan of 100 years or less, few trees date from the founding of the Park.

Condition:

The natural forest succession and regeneration of new trees and shrubs has been limited by Park maintenance, especially mowing. The forest is uniformly of old age class. Non native horticultural trees have been planted throughout the Park. See Appendix 3 - Forest Stand Assessment by Kestrel Research Incorporated.

Bow River Bank

Elements:

Average water level of the Bow River is about one metre below adjoining land, subject to flooding; fluvial gravel river bank bars have been continually re-forming with deposition and erosion, gravel "beaches" have formed near the west and east ends; rock facing and a series of groynes have been placed to resist erosion.

Image:

Open river panorama; the bank is unnatural with rock work; the gravel bars afford beach-like water access, the groynes provide eddies and spaces of still water for play and boats.

Authenticity:

Natural river bank has been changed by erosion mitigation, facing rock and groyness were placed within the last two decades.

Condition:

The soil river bank above and between rock work is being eroded by human efforts to access the river water.

Lagoon on the Inner Channel

Elements:

Inner channel water flows are controlled by structures at the upstream and downstream (85th St.) end: the lagoon was formed by widening the downstream portion near 85th St.; a complex of dikes, channels and basins parallel the north side, with foot bridges connecting the island dikes. See also Landmark Ornaments in the Lagoon

Image:

Spectacular, serene vista over the length of the lagoon with the south bank evergreen forest as backdrop and tall, old poplars and colourful willows as highlights on the north shore.

.Authenticity:

The swimming basin has been filled and planted and its enclosing dike removed, otherwise the original form of the lagoon and channels is original and intact; the original, more rustic foot bridges have been replaced.

Condition:

Water flow controls are ineffective and consequent fluctuating water levels result in unstable shore banks, siltation and poor ice conditions.

Lagoon Recreation: Skating, Boating

Elements:

Skating takes place on the lagoon and associated waterways, including an upstream portion of the island channel; the ice surface is maintained with snow removal and grooming; shade from the evergreen forest of the south bank helps to sustain the ice through Chinook periods; rented canoes and other craft access the main lagoon from the constructed channels; recorded music is played to accompany these activities.

Image:

Skating and boating add to the idyllic image.

Authenticity:

Traditional activities continuing through the history of the park; the historic and iconic Orthophonic music player was removed and music is played through a sound system in an adjoining service building.

Condition:

Current ineffectiveness of the channel water controls result in flooding and fluctuations of the ice surface and interruptions in the suitability of the ice for skating; the original wood Peterborough canoes and rowboats have been replaced with modern canoes and paddle boats; the original boat landings have been removed and replaced in different locations with more recent docking and access facilities.

Open Lawn Spaces

Elements

The forest was selectively cleared for activity fields in various sizes and places at the outset of developing the Park; lawns have been planted and maintained in these spaces.

Image:

An open park-like quality is created with groves of trees in contrast with the expanses of open fields and glades.

Authenticity:

The original patterns of cleared spaces are essentially original with minor further clearing and planting; historical functions of the open field spaces including horse racing and organized team sports have been replaced by unstructured play.

Condition:

The lawns in the open areas are in reasonable condition.

Roadway Access Patterns

Elements

A single bridge brings vehicles into the centre of the Park and to central parking near the entrance; at the centre of the Park the entrance road leads to a fork from which one road leads to a turn around at the east end and another forms a loop around the west end of the Park.

Image:

Touring the park in vehicles has been traditional; motor vehicles have an increasingly effective presence in the Park in conflict with pedestrian and slower paced activities.

Authenticity:

The roadway layout remains exactly as original except for the realignment of the bridge and a shift toward the river of the westbound section of the west loop; the bridge which originally descended perpendicular over the channel was replaced with a concrete structure in a north-westerly angle; the roadways have been widened and resurfaced with pavement; additional parking spaces have been constructed at the centre and along the outer roads roughly tripling the early number of parked vehicles; an original vehicular trail to the former camping area in the far west end was abandoned and remains in part as a foot path. The original, historic access to the Park by street railway ceased in 1950.

Condition:

The roadways have become overwhelmed with increasing traffic and parking which on busy summer days encroaches onto parkland. The roads have irregular surfaces with puddles at times from snow melting and rain. The existing bridge deck requires structural replacement.

Central Arrival and Social Square

Elements:

At the foot of the original vehicle bridge and adjoining the lagoon is a square used for parking; its function and form are further defined by the main pavilion on the west side and an inner constructed channel of the lagoon on the east.

Image:

The square is the focus of recreation access to the lagoon and of social gathering associated with the pavilion; it is the prime viewpoint for the vista down the lagoon.

Authenticity:

The original gravel yard is now a paved parking lot with awkward access from the realigned entrance roadway. The original pavilion, a Dance Hall, was in the same location as the current pavilion on the west side of the square. A rustic tea room, removed, with a veranda was attached to the pavilion on the edge of the lagoon. The original main boat landing, a canopied wood structure on the southeast corner of the square, was removed. A flagpole with "Hollywood" searchlights, centered in the square, has been replaced with a flagpole at the east side

Condition:

The vehicle traffic and parking are in conflict with pedestrian activities.

Pavilions

Elements:

The main pavilion continues to serve as a food concession, and presently, equipment rentals; five other pavilions at the centre, east and west ends are picnic shelters.

Image:

The picnic shelters, with open sides and broad symmetrical hip roofs are a classic form.

Authenticity:

The original main pavilion, like a rural hall of wood frame construction, was a vibrant dining and dancing venue; the current main pavilion was built in 1958 of concrete and steel; the picnic pavilions have been reconstructed or re-roofed, principally of steel, in forms similar to the originals, in their original locations. The function of the tea house is provided in a room of the main pavilion.

Condition:

All of the pavilion structures remain in serviceable condition.

Rides and Amusement Attractions

Elements:

Rides and amusements historically comprised a substantial and characteristic area of interest at the Park. The individual elements are referred to in Authenticity, below.

Image:

The amusement park aspect, with elements collectively called "Funland"

Authenticity:

Elements no longer existing:

- The carousel, centered in the east part of the Park, was removed to Heritage Park.
- The location of the midway rides/games north of the central square is marked by fences and a concrete pad, others along with a "fun" food outlet were associated with the carousel; one rocket ship piece remains, unused and dilapidated.
- Dance hall, as in the discussion of the pavilion above.

Elements remaining in the Park include:

- The miniature train with ride-on engine and passenger cars is a replacement of the original model supplied to the Park in 1960. The railway track circuits the east end of the Park.
- While golf is referred to in early accounts of the Park, the history of the existing miniature golf course is uncertain.

Condition:

The railway rolling stock and track need repair or replacement. The miniature golf components are deteriorated.

Landmark Ornaments on the Lagoon

The “Orthophonic” device that played recorded music, housed in a gabled wood structure, was located in the centre of the lagoon; near it to the west was a choreographed fountain with coloured lights.

Image:

The “Orthophonic” and fountain were iconic in the ambiance of the lagoon area.

Authenticity:

The “Orthophonic” was removed and recorded music is played from a sound system located in the service building; a replacement floating fountain has been placed west of the original fountain location.

Missing Elements Distinctive to the Early History of the Park

Access by streetcar: The Calgary Municipal Railway originally operated the Park.

Swimming pool: A main basin at the east end of the lagoon provided for swimming in the river water. A children’s wading pool was in an enclosed area of the constructed channels. Swimming facilities were substantial and included changing houses, wooden sun decks and diving platform. Swimming was shut down as a result of a drowning and health concerns, finally in 1959.

Camping: Campsites accessible by car and located in the west end indicate the remote wilderness character of the early Park.

Cabins: A series of 11 cabins for rent were located along the westerly river front.

Recognition

Although not of world scale significance, Bowness Park, in the language of international interest in heritage sites, would meet with the definition of a Cultural Landscape: “cultural landscapes represent the combined works of nature and of man...they are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both internal and external.”

The natural environment of Bowness Park has been adapted for human use over time and the activities and features there express the values and social lives of the people who have made and used it.

Bowness Park is one of Calgary’s oldest parks and is listed on Calgary’s Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. It has been recognized as a historic place to be conserved and also to ensure that it will be enjoyed by visitors today and into the future.

APPENDIX 3

BOWNESS PARK FOREST STAND ASSESSMENT FALL 2008



KESTREL RESEARCH INCORPORATED

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March 20, 2009

Mr. Garth Balls
IBI Landplan
Suite 400, 417 – 14th Street NW.
Calgary, AB
T2N 2A1

Re: Bowness Park Forest Stand Assessment Fall 2008

Dear Mr. Balls,

The following letter report provides a review of the forest stand assessment of Bowness Park and the remnant native shrub/treed areas as commissioned by IBI Landplan.

Over Story Survey Timing and Key Results

The vegetation survey of Bowness Park was limited to an over story stand analysis of key stands including native, semi-native and stands which have been developed as part of landscaping of the park over its history. The park initially was part of Bowness Ranch but started to be developed as a recreational destination for Calgary area residents in 1910. Over the past 100 years the vegetation within the park has gone through an evolution through the management of existing stands and introduction of a broad range of non-native tree species. Vegetation surveys were conducted on September 10th and on October 16th 2008 to evaluate the effects of a significant windstorm that occurred October 7th. During this 6 hour + wind event, maximum wind speeds at the Calgary Airport reached 93 km/h resulting in approximately 6 mature trees being felled naturally by wind. No injuries or damage to property were recorded from the occurrence of this event.

Figure # 1 illustrates the seven dominant stands within the park boundaries or immediately adjacent to the park boundaries. Stands have been identified with distinctive attributes relating to remnant native species composition or stand attributes that reflect varying levels of historic and/or current stand management. The area has evolved from being a natural river floodplain poplar/spruce/fir community to a rural parkland area and subsequently to an urban parkland area.

Table # 1 provides a review of the seven dominant stands and provides an evaluation of dominant species, co-dominant species, diameter and height, age class and a brief discussion of stand health conditions and factors affecting stands. This table also provides a list of special notes for each stand.

Table # 2 provides a list of key over story species, a few dominant native understory species and also identifies some of the more common weed species present in the park. Forty-two species were identified but few understory species were identified with the exception of weed infestations. No rare species are known to be present in the park nor were any rare species identified.

Native and Non-native Arboreal Stand Management Planning

Even though the historical management of the Bowness Park has involved planting numerous non-native species the arboreal species have an inherent aesthetic and botanical value. Several of these plantings are well established with ages ranging from 30 to 40 + years. In recent years there appears to have been a trend towards using non-native species such as bur oak with non-native species now form the majority of new plantings. The park has historically and currently using native species and hybrid poplar species such as Griffin and Northwest poplar in the park planting and horticultural management however few newly planted individuals were identified throughout stands 1 and 4, which represent the more manicured areas within the park.

Although introduction of non-native tree species throughout the park has an inherent value from a botanical perspective, a decision should be made regarding future plantings and a decision regarding the proportion of native vs. non-native species plantings should be made. The existing non-native arboreal species have potential for use within a park interpretive program which could focus on comparison of non-native and native species within the manicured or more natural areas of the park. The park actively mitigates the impact of beavers on the poplar particularly near the Bow River using conventional wire mesh wrapping of the first metre of the tree bowls.

Native natural regeneration in stands 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 is occurring but in most of these areas, stands are relatively decadent with dense crown closure or with understory being dominated by aggressive invasive species such as smooth brome and Canada thistle (a noxious weed in Alberta). These conditions do not promote natural stand development to include a range of younger and middle age classes.

In general, with the exception of the more decadent stands and in particular stand 3, the health for most individual trees and stands is good. Numerous natural insect, disease and fungus conditions were observed throughout the park including the presence of: leaf minors, leaf spot, powdery mildew, hypoxylon canker, diplodia gall, rough bark, adelgid galls on spruce and spruce gall midge. Although no tent caterpillar was observed during the late fall survey it can be expected that in certain years there may outbreaks of tent caterpillar occurring throughout the poplar stands within the park.

The presence of all of these species of insect and disease can be considered normal with no specific problematic outbreaks. Stand 3 in the west end of the park, located below Stoney Trail does have significant die back of spruce in particular with 50 % of the spruce either dead or dying. These conditions have likely been produced from a range of factors including an altered light and moisture regime resulting from the construction of the Stoney Trail overpass and increased exposure to salt from bridge ice/snow

management. It appears that little to no mitigation to promote stand health occurred during and following bridge construction. As a result, the health of the spruce that forms more than 50 % of the stand is seriously compromised. The current conditions result in stressing of the existing individuals predisposing these individuals to infestation by bark beetle, increased levels of wood rot and subsequent wind throw. This is a high visitor use area of the park and presents a significant public safety hazard at all times but particularly during high wind events. Unless this stand is actively managed it can be expected that the spruce will progressively die and wind throw until there are few if any spruce remaining. This stand should be actively managed in the future to mitigate the public safety hazard and promote re-growth of white spruce if the decision is made to promote the natural species composition and health of this stand. The semi-native poplar spruce stands on the east and west end of the park have under story dominated by smooth brome and Canada thistle, a noxious weed in Alberta. Future park management of these stands should include a noxious weed mitigation program for these infestations.

Stand 4 has a high inherent value as it appears to be the remnant of a native black cottonwood stand which is now reaching older age classes and becoming decadent. This species is near the eastern edge of its native range in Canada. This stand is in one of the high visitor use areas including a play ground and commonly used picnic area. This stand has extensive natural heart wood rot throughout most of the larger individuals and can be expected to naturally wind throw over the next several decades. Although individuals within this stand can be expected to wind throw in high wind fall events, the extensive nature of rot within some individuals may result in failure of parts of the trees or the entire tree at any time. Future stand planning and management should be designed to mitigate public risk and to develop a more diversified age class. This will involve a more detailed analysis of individual tree bowl integrity and a controlled removal of high risk individuals. As well it would be ideal if black cottonwood saplings could be propagated or obtained from horticulture nurseries and used to diversify the age class of this stand.

Stand 6, is a native mature north slope white spruce and is located at the southern boundary of Bowness Park and is immediately adjacent and partially located on private land associated with the residential development in Bowness. This stand has some natural regeneration and also has some non-native species such as smooth brome and Canada thistle.

Stand 7, the Woods Home Douglas fir stand adjacent to the Bowness Park area is an old age class stand with little natural regeneration and few younger age class individuals. This stand has significant aesthetic and heritage value but should also have a stand management plan developed and implemented if the stand is to be maintained in perpetuity.

Conclusions

The main conclusion from the Bowness Park stand survey is that a stand management plan should be developed and implemented for each of the main stands. These plans should focus on reducing risk to the public from decadent individuals in old age class stands and in the stand below Stoney Trail. This may also utilize partial or entire “park closures” during high wind storm events. As well a decision should be made regarding the use of non-native arboreal species within the park or in certain dominant stands. In all of these stands it is necessary to plant poplar and spruce to develop and maintain a diversified age class and maintain older age classes. If use of native tree species compatible with natural ecosystems is preferred, then depending on the area and management objectives, the dominant natural tree species are white spruce, black cottonwood, balsam poplar and Douglas fir.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to call me at 403-861-1676.

Regards,
Kestrel Research Inc.

Ken Baker,
B.Sc.F, M.E. Des., R.P.F.

Attach.

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Figure # 1. City of Calgary Bowness Park Stand Descriptions



Image: Google Earth 2007

Stand # 1 - Manicured park area historically developed.

Stand # 2 - East end of park (East of 85th Street) remnant native poplar stand with modified under story.

Stand # 3 - West end of park (Near Stoney Trail) remnant native poplar/spruce stand with modified under story.

Stand # 4 – Black cottonwood stand, high visitor use area including a playground, picnic shelter, picnic tables and fire pits.

Stand # 5 - Native black cottonwood, balsam poplar and white spruce stand.

Stand # 6 – North slope spruce stand.

Stand # 7 - Woods Home Douglas fir heritage stand.

Table 1 Bowness Park Stand Evaluation Table

Stand # & Description	Dominant Species	Associated Species	Diameter Height	Age Class	Health Condition	Special Notes
Stand # 1 Manicured Portion of Park	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam poplar <i>Populus x northwest</i> Northwest poplar <i>Populus x griffin</i> Griffin poplar <i>Picea pungens</i> Colorado blue spruce	Numerous horticultural and arboreal species	Diameter 33- 80 cm Height 20 to 27 m	30 to 80 +	Generally healthy, older poplar subject to extensive heart wood rot with decay compromising longevity and tree bowl structural integrity. Intensive wind storms (> 60 km/hr) and heavy snow fall events during the growing season are expected to result in wind throw of larger individuals and pose a significant public safety hazard when the public is using the park.	Throughout the park historically planting of exotic ornamentals have resulted in the development of an arboretum of uncommon species, many of which have an inherent arboreal, aesthetic and interpretive value. Few young individuals of any species with the exception of exotic species are present except in peripheral areas or more native areas of the park. It is expected that general park management and maintenance limits the development of native tree suckering and in-growth. Park management and protection of deciduous species mitigate losses to beaver particularly of older individuals (30 + years).
Stand # 2 East End of Park – Remnant native stand and understory	<i>Populus trichocarpa</i> Black cottonwood <i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam poplar <i>Picea glauca</i> White spruce	Numerous native shrub species with introduced species and Canada thistle	Diameter 60 cm Height 15 to 20 m	60 to 90 +	Generally healthy, older poplar and cottonwood in general.	Few if any black cottonwood naturally regenerating.
Stand #3 West end of Park – Remnant native stand and understory	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam poplar <i>Populus trichocarpa</i> Black cottonwood <i>Picea glauca</i> White spruce	Numerous native shrub species with introduced species and Canada thistle	Diameter 30 to 50 cm Height 17 to 20 m	60 to 90 +	Fifty (50) % of spruce stand under Stoney trail is dead or dying, being infested with bark beetles, senescence probably due to road construction effects on light, surface drainage and reduced subsoil moisture predisposing spruce to insect infestation.	Fifty (50) % of stand under Stoney trail is dead or dying , being infested with bark beetles and prone to wind throw in high wind events. This area is a high visitor use area.
Stand # 4 Black Cottonwood Stand – High Visitor Use Area with playground area picnic tables, fire pits and picnic shelter.	<i>Populus trichocarpa</i> Black cottonwood	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam poplar	Diameter 40-80 cm Height 15 to 30 m	90 to 125+	This stand is generally decadent with little if any new regeneration. This stand has extensive heart wood rot compromising the tree bowl structural integrity. A wind storm occurred on October 7 th between 12 and 6 PM resulted in 4 large individuals being wind thrown, no injuries or damage of vehicles was reported. Maximum wind gusts recorded at the Calgary International Airport were 93 km/hr. Hourly winds averaged between 30 and 46 km/hr between 2pm and 6 pm. Due to the compromised tree bowl structural integrity individual trees may fall at any time regardless of wind speeds being experienced within the park.	This stand needs a stand management plan to evaluate and manage public safety risk and to promote the continued presence of the stand if it is to remain over the long term. This stand is one of the most prone to wind throw and during wind storms may pose one of the highest potential threats to park users.
Stand # 5 Native Cottonwood/Spruce Stand	<i>Populus trichocarpa</i> Black cottonwood <i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam poplar <i>Picea glauca</i> White spruce	Numerous native shrub species with Canada thistle	Diameter 30 to 50 cm Height 8 to 25 m	60 to 90 +	Large individuals area decadent with significant 40 + % heartwood rot.	Older individuals in stand are prone to wind throw during high wind events within the park.
Stand # 6 North Slope White Spruce Stand	<i>Picea glauca</i> <i>White Spruce</i> <i>Populus trichocarpa</i> Black Cottonwood <i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam Poplar	Numerous native shrub and understory species with smooth brome and Canada thistle	Diameter 30 to 60 + cm Height 10 to 20 + m	75 to 120 +	Generally healthy and representative of a steep north slope mature white spruce stand with ages ranging from 80 to 150 + years. Little natural regeneration occurring. The stand includes balsam poplar and black cottonwood and likely includes planting of hybrid poplar species.	Natural mature white spruce. Few individuals in younger age classes. Located on the margin of private land of Bowness Park and private land within the adjacent Bowness community.
Stand # 7 Woods Home Douglas fir Stand	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesia</i> Douglas fir	<i>Picea glauca</i> <i>Populus balsamifera</i>	Diameter 60 cm to 115 + cm Height 25 to 30 m	300 to 400 +	Larger individuals occasionally being topped (40 %) in high wind events.	Throughout this stand few new Douglas fir are establishing naturally. Occasionally there are individuals with diameters of 5 to 10 cm and heights of 5 + M. In one area there is a dense stand (15 + stems/m ² of regeneration with at least 100 + individuals.

Table # 2 Bowness Park 2008 Native and Exotic Over story Vegetation Observed

Scientific Name	Common Name	Tree/Shrub
<i>Acer ginnala Maxim.</i>	Amur maple	tree
<i>Acer negundo</i>	Manitoba maple	tree
<i>Acer rubrum L.</i>	Red maple	tree
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia (Nutt)</i>	Saskatoon	shrub
<i>Aster conspicuus (Lindl.)</i>	Showy aster	forb
<i>Betula occidentalis (Hook.)</i>	Water birch	shrub
<i>Betula papyrifera (Marsh.)</i>	White birch	shrub
<i>Caragana arborescens</i>	Common caragana	shrub
<i>Caragana pygmaea</i>	Pygmy caragana	shrub
<i>Cirsium arvense ((L.) Scop.)</i>	Canada thistle	forb
<i>Cornus stolonifera (Michx.)</i>	Red-osier dogwood	shrub
<i>Creatagus sp.</i>	Hawthorn species	tree
<i>Disporum trachycarpum ((S. Wats.)B.&H.)</i>	Fairybells	forb
<i>Eleagnus commutata Bernh. Ex Rydb.</i>	Silverberry	shrub
<i>Fraxinus pensylvanica Marsh.</i>	Red ash	tree
<i>Larix siberica (Ledeb.)</i>	Siberian larch	tree
<i>Lathyrus ochroleucus (Hook)</i>	Cream colored vetchling	forb
<i>Picea glauca ((Moench) Voss)</i>	White spruce	tree
<i>Picea pungens Engelm.</i>	Colorado blue spruce	tree
<i>Pinus contorta (Loudon)</i>	Lodgepole pine	tree
<i>Pinus mugo Turra var. mughus Zenari</i>	Mugo pine	tree
<i>Pinus ponderosa Laws</i>	Ponderosa pine	tree
<i>Pinus sylverstris (L.)</i>	Scott's pine	tree
<i>Populus balsamifera (L.)</i>	Balsam poplar	tree
<i>Populus x griffin</i>	Griffin poplar	tree
<i>Populus x northwest</i>	Northwest poplar	tree
<i>Populus tremuloides (Michx.)</i>	Aspen	tree
<i>Populs trichocarpa Torr. & Gray</i>	Black cottonwood	tree
<i>Potentilla fruticosa (L.)</i>	Shrubby cinquefoil	forb
<i>Prunus maackii</i>	Amur cherry	shrub
<i>Prunus padus var. commutata</i>	Mayday tree	tree
<i>Prunus pensylvanica (L.f.)</i>	Pin cherry	shrub
<i>Prunus virginiana (L.)</i>	Choke cherry	shrub
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii (Franco)</i>	Douglas fir	tree
<i>Quercus macrocarpa Michx.</i>	Bur oak	tree
<i>Rosa acicularis Lindl.</i>	Prickly rose	shrub
<i>Salix bebbiana (Sarg.)</i>	Beaked willow	shrub
<i>Salix pentandra</i>	Laurel leaf willow	shrub
<i>Sorbus americana Marsh.</i>	American mountain ash	tree
<i>Spiraea betulifolia Pallas</i>	White meadowsweet	shrub
<i>Syringa x hyacinthiflora</i>	American hybrid lilac	shrub
<i>Ulmus americana (L.)</i>	American elm	tree

APPENDI 4

OPEN HOUSE RESPONSES

Bowness Park Redevelopment
PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE

Held October 22, 2008 – Bowness Sportsplex, Main hall
7904 – 43rd Avenue N.W.

Thank you for your interest in the Bowness Park Redevelopment Plan. The City of Calgary Parks sees Bowness Park as one of Calgary's unique and notable parks. Recreational opportunities in the park are varied and include passive and active activities; winter and summer and water and land activities. The City of Calgary Parks also acknowledges that Bowness Park is one of Calgary's oldest parks and is listed on Calgary's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. As a result retaining the historic significance of the park is important but it is equally important to ensure that the park is valuable for the users today and into the future.

The City of Calgary Parks is now in the preliminary stages of redevelopment planning for Bowness Park. Currently, the City is gathering information about how park visitors use the park and how the park could be redeveloped to better meet visitor's needs.

The planning process involves a step by step approach. First, community input, suggestions and comments are gathered. The next step is to analyze the information and determine how it should be incorporated into the redevelopment plan. During this process the information is assessed for appropriateness, feasibility, and suitability. Finally, the results are combined to form a tentative plan for redevelopment that will be presented to the community for feedback and refinement. The tentative timeline for the presentation of the first draft of the plan is early February 2009.

Subsequent steps involve presenting the refined plan to The City of Calgary Council and securing funding to put the plan into action. Presentation to Council is tentatively scheduled for April 2009. Construction schedules would be contingent upon Council approval and allocation of funding.

Your input is valuable, appreciated and will be used when developing the plan for Bowness Park. Please take the time to fill out the following questionnaire.

For further information, please contact Michelle Reid at 403-268-5290 or via email at michelle.x.reid@calgary.ca



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

138 Responses:

1. How often do you visit Bowness Park?

A. Daily	35
B. Weekly	47
C. Monthly	27
D. Once or twice a year	10
E. Never	

2. What activities do you participate in while visiting Bowness Park?

A. Walking	128
B. Cycling	56
C. Dog Walking	45
D. Jogging	39
E. Nature Appreciation	93
F. Picnics	64
G. Family Outings	74
H. Skating	95
I. Paddling on the Lagoon	42
J. Other (please specify)	

Bird Feeding	Mini golf
Canoeing	Canoeing the eddies in the river
Put in to paddle through town	Group Picnics – i.e. church
Rafting	Bird Watching & Feeding
Out of town visitors	Fishing
Relaxing/re-energize	Birthday Parties
Group Fires	Bird watching
Launching or rafting	Fishing
Art - painting and photography	Coffee and coffee cake
Sketching	Parks/playgrounds/splash park
Canoe on bow	Bird watching
Art – painting, drawing	Bird & mammal watching
Raft - launch	Fishing
Swimming in river	Bird Watching
Train	Play grounds
Benches	Orienteering
Rafting, fishing, cross-country skiing	
Children's Park, waterpark, wading pool	
Teaching children park use (swings and slides)	



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

3. What do you like best about Bowness Park?

Comments:

Total number of comments:	160
Natural Setting	104
Skating on Lagoon	29
Family-oriented activities	16

4. What are the most serious problems with Bowness Park today? What should be done to improve Bowness Park?

Comments:

Total number of comments:	223
Too many cars; Overcrowded on Summer Weekends	70
Facilities on in state of disrepair	42
Pathways need Improvement	30
Provide parking north of Bow River for rafters	16
Vandalism is a concern	16
Erosion on riverbank needs rehabilitation	11
Noise from partiers is a concern	11
Security in the Park is needed	5



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

5. **Bowness Park is a cherished recreation resource and there is a concern that it is being loved to death – that it is being used beyond capacity, leading to deterioration of the resource. Traffic becomes gridlocked on busy summer days. The pathway and riverbank are impassible during rainy weather. City of Calgary Parks has identified the following issues as important in redevelopment of Bowness Park. Please express your thoughts by marking the applicable box.**

Issues	Very Adequate	Adequate	Problematic	Seriously Problematic
a. Automobile Circulation and Parking	6	23	58	45
b. Raft and Boat Launching on the Bow River	6	39	43	28
c. Reserving of Group Picnic Sites	10	59	30	6
d. Food Services	13	65	36	14
e. Washrooms	13	73	33	11
f. Condition of Bow River Bank	6	42	49	29
g. Completeness and continuity of Pathway System	12	61	24	13
h. Quality of Pathways	8	48	44	21
i. Connections to Regional Pathways & other destinations	21	68	34	5
j. Conservation of Natural Features (Native Forest, Riverbank)	17	50	43	27

Comments:

Total number of Comments:	105
Pathways need improvement	27
Parking and traffic are problematic	20
Erosion on riverbank needs rehabilitation	12
Relocate boat launching to north side of Bow River	9
Facilities are in a state of disrepair	3



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

6. Is it important to keep and improve the existing attractions at Bowness Park?

Attractions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Mini-Golf	24	25	58	23
b. Train Rides	11	22	56	43
c. Splash Pad / Water Play	6	6	59	58
d. Canoe / Paddleboats	1	4	55	71
e. Skating (Winter)			23	110

Comments:

Total number of comments:	91
Facilities are in a state of disrepair	15
Skating on the Lagoon is good	14
Keep Bowness natural	12
Family-oriented Park is good	9
Relocate boat launching to north side of Bow River	2



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

7. What new features would be desirable at Bowness Park?

Feature	Not Desirable	Somewhat Desirable	Desirable	Very Desirable
a. Swimming Pool	90	13	11	14
b. River Swimming	77	25	20	11
c. Wading Pool	27	31	44	32
d. Amusement Rides	51	16	10	6
e. Historical Carousel	60	32	20	21
f. Dancing	107	31	18	17
g. Bicycle Rental	46	35	30	16
h. Refreshment Booths	25	34	45	24
i. Restaurant	29	31	33	34

Other:

- Skate Rental would be good.
- Eddy maker on river left
- Controlled entry
- A café
- Proper facilities for winter activities like skating.
- Provide mini vehicles (peddle cars & electric golf carts)
- Camping
- A café – less than a full restaurant
- Paved pathways
- Outdoor stage would be nice as there was one at one point in time
- Dance pavilion with a porch
- Tennis courts either in the park or on west end of 48 Avenue NW
- Tubing
- A walking bridge across from Baker Park
- Art Installations
- Bridge over the river to Baker (2 locations)
- Nature Education on Site – spontaneous
- Education programs
- Flower garden
- Skate board park
- Skate board park
- Info/map booth

Comments:

Total number of comments:	86
Nice to have a well-run café or classy restaurant	15
Keep Bowness natural	13
More attractions will result in more overcrowding	9
Re-locate boat launching to north side of Bow River	4



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

- 8. Bowness Park was created by John Hextall in the early 1900's as a nature retreat and pleasure resort. Further developed by the City of Calgary, it has continued to be a cherished, traditional place of family recreation. While the riverfront and forest as well as created elements like the lagoon and roadways remain in their original locations, their forms have changed over time and nearly all of the other historical pieces, including the old buildings and build amusements are gone. What is the best way to conserve and commemorate Historic Bowness Park? Please mark the box which best represents your thoughts.**

Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Reconstruct the historic Park, recapturing the character of the 1920's to 1940's and use the historical features to satisfy present and future needs.	34	33	30	20
b. Change and develop the Park for contemporary use. Reconstruct historical features that would suit present and future use.	28	22	43	22
c. Continue the traditional family recreation at the Park with entirely new development and activities. Inform visitors of the Park's history with interpretive signs.	27	29	36	14

Comments:

Total number of comments:	81
History of Bowness Park is important	24
Keep Bowness Park natural	15
A nice café in the Park would be good	2
Return the carousel	1



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: Initial Public Input
Open House Held October 22, 2008 & Online Responses

9. Do you have any other information or comments about Bowness Park? If so, please comment here:

Comments:

Total number of comments:	194
Administer Bowness Park in conjunction with Baker Park	38
Keep Bowness Park natural	34
Re-locate boat launching to north side of Bow River	29
Various suggestions for traffic and parking – less rather than more parking is preferred	26
Pathways need improvement	23
Family-orientation should be preserved	16
Policing, security required after closing	15
Facilities are in a state of disrepair	11
Skating on the Lagoon is good	9
Eroded riverbank requires rehabilitation	6



**Bowness Park Redevelopment
PROPOSED DESIGN OPEN HOUSE**

February 18, 2009 – Bowness Sportsplex, Main hall
7904 – 43rd Avenue N.W.

Thank you for your interest in the Bowness Park Redevelopment Plan.

The City of Calgary Parks considers Bowness Park as one of Calgary's unique and notable parks. Recreational opportunities in the park are varied and include passive and active activities; with winter and summer and water and land activities. The City of Calgary Parks also acknowledges that Bowness Park is one of Calgary's oldest parks and is listed on Calgary's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. As a result retaining the historic significance of the park is important. It is equally important to ensure the park will be enjoyed by visitors today and into the future.

The City of Calgary Parks is now in the second phase of redevelopment planning. The first step involved gathering information about how park visitors use the park and how they would like the park to be redeveloped. This information was analyzed to determine how it should be incorporated into the redevelopment plan. This process included assessing the information for appropriateness, feasibility, and suitability. The results were then combined to form a tentative plan for redevelopment that is now being presented to the community for feedback.

Subsequent steps involve refining the plan based on public feedback and presenting the plan to The City of Calgary Council and securing funding to put the plan into action. Presentation to Council is tentatively scheduled for April 2009. Construction schedules would be contingent upon Council approval and allocation of funding.

Your input is valuable. Please take the time to fill out the following questionnaire.

For further information, please contact Michelle Reid at 403-268-5290 or via email at michelle.x.reid@calgary.ca



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

92 Responses:

Bowness Park is loved for its recreational attractions, natural attractions, proximity to the Bow River and for all of the various park amenities. However the park is in danger of being "loved to death" as many of the park's finest features (natural and built) are rapidly deteriorating.

The annotated drawings are proposed plans for the redevelopment. These drawings include plans for the Central Court, the Lagoon and channels, the circulation through the park, the picnic areas, the natural features and the historic features.

Please comment on the following areas of the plans:

A. The Central Court

The Central Court will act as a hub for the Park and will be the primary access point to the lagoon in both the summer and winter months. Visitors will have the opportunity to rent the boats, put on their skates, warm up with a hot chocolate, or enjoy a full meal.

Please respond to the features of the Central Court Area:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Courtyard area to be filled with benches, tables, and chairs (cars will be eliminated from this area)	76(82%)	8(9%)	8(9%)
Tea House constructed to overlook the lagoon for casual dining	69(75%)	11(12%)	12(13%)
Pavilion adapted for warming up in the winter, washrooms, and a food kiosk to serve snacks	87(95%)	2(2%)	3(3%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	31
Upgrade Food Concessions/Add Tea House	5

Public Engagement Summary
 Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
 Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

B. The Lagoon, Channels and Water Play

The Lagoon and channels will essentially be left as they exist today. Alterations will include repairing the deteriorating edges and installing a permanent stepped landing for better access to the lagoon. The historic swimming pool will be reinterpreted as a contemporary wading area and will replace the existing deteriorating water spray area. The historic orthophonic device will be re-created to celebrate the history of the park. Boat launching onto the Bow River will no longer be permissible in Bowness Park (excluding formal training between the groynes). All informal boat launching will be relocated to the north side of the river in Baker Park.

Please respond to the features of the Lagoon and Channels:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Improve access to the lagoon with a permanent stepped landing	74(80%)	7(8%)	11(12%)
Retain boating and skating activities	92(100%)		
Reconstruct the historic swimming area for contemporary water play	73(79%)	9(10%)	10(11%)
Recreate historic orthophonic device	53(58%)	17(18%)	22(24%)
Relocate informal Bow River craft launching to Baker Park	71(77%)	8(9%)	13(14%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	38
Move Boat Launching to Baker Park	9
Enhance Historic Aspects of the Park	4



Public Engagement Summary
 Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
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C. Circulation

Circulation has increasingly become an issue at Bowness Park. Vehicular traffic is negatively impacting people’s enjoyment of the park. The regional pathway system cannot accommodate all users, including cyclists, pedestrians, etc. Dirt paths have been created along the river edge. The proposed option is to limit parking to a centralized area and use the existing paths (including formalizing some of the dirt paths) and historic roadways for the regional and secondary pathway system.

On summer weekends overflow parking will be directed to Baker Park and an open air shuttle will transport visitors from Baker Park over the Stoney Trail pedestrian bridge, circulate through Bowness Park, and allow visitors to depart the shuttle at a variety of areas within Bowness Park. The long term plans (25+ years) also accommodate the location of an additional pedestrian bridge from Bowness Park to Baker Park.

Please respond to the proposed circulation components:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Limit parking to a centralized location and convert roads to pathways	72(79%)	14(15%)	6(6%)
Regional pathway will be paved surface	75(81%)	9(10%)	8(9%)
Pathways at water edge will be crushed gravel	78(85%)	8(9%)	6(6%)
Shuttle from Baker Park to Bowness Park	63(68%)	15(16%)	14(16%)
Proposed bridge alignment (25+ year timeline)	60(65%)	12(13%)	20(22%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	84
Shuttle is not a Good Idea	7
Pedestrian Bridge to Baker Park is not Needed	14
Pedestrian Bridge to Baker Park Should be Built Sooner Than Later	14
Permit Parking on Street Adjacent to Park	9



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

D. Play and Picnics

The open play fields and picnic areas will remain an important part of Bowness Park. The open play fields were cleared very early in the history of the park, and by 1923 these areas were clearly defined.

Family picnics and larger picnic gathering areas will be retained within Bowness Park. The amount of picnic tables will not be reduced; however the picnic tables will be located further throughout the park in a more informal arrangement. A food kiosk will be constructed at the location of the historic carousel where visitors can purchase snacks and cold drinks. The location of the historic campsites and summer cottage areas will be reinterpreted into picnic areas with fire pits and BBQs. The train will remain as a play element, but the mini-golf and amusement rides will be eliminated from the park.

Please respond to the features of the Play Fields and Picnic Areas:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Retain open play fields	87(95%)	2(2%)	3(3%)
Picnic tables to take on a more informal organization	81(88%)	6(6%)	5(6%)
Food kiosk located at the historic carousel location	67(74%)	11(12%)	13(14%)
Historic campsites and cottage locations reinterpreted into picnic areas with BBQs	76(83%)	3(3%)	13(14%)
Retain mini-train	78(86%)	6(6%)	7(8%)
Eliminate mini-golf	55(60%)	26(28%)	11(12%)
Eliminate amusement rides	68(74%)	15(16%)	9(10%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	36
Keep Food Concessions at Central Court/ No Kiosks	5
Keep Mini Golf	7
Keep Mini-Train	8
Eliminate Mini-Train	1



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

E. Natural Elements

The natural elements of Bowness Park continue to be an important feature within the Park. Unfortunately much of the natural river edge has deteriorated and some of the natural forest areas are not regenerating naturally. The redevelopment plan for Bowness Park includes stabilizing the river edge and establishing directed access to the river in specific spots. The plan also includes leaving the far west and east ends in their existing natural state and starting a naturalized re-vegetation program in areas at the centre of the park.

Please respond to the plans to retain and restore the Natural Elements:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Stabilize the river edge and provide directed access to river	81(88%)	4(4%)	7(8%)
Retain natural forest at east and west ends	88(96%)	1(1%)	3(3%)
Establish a naturalization process for areas in the centre of the park	79(86%)	7(8%)	6(6%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	22
Naturalization of Parks Areas is Positive	9
Keep Maintained Grass in Open Play Areas	2



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

F. Historic Elements

Bowness Park is a cherished historic place. The redevelopment plan for the park acknowledges the history of the park but also appreciates that the park is actively used by visitors today. The plan includes the restoration of deteriorating elements including the lagoon, the miniature train, and the central court. The direct recreation of missing elements will be limited to the orthophonic device in the centre of the lagoon. Some missing elements will be reinterpreted including the tea house, the wading area, the carousel location, and the cabins and camping areas. Interpretation will tell the story of how the park was first established and how it has evolved over time to become the park it is today.

Please respond to the plans to celebrate the history of Bowness Park:

	Agree	Disagree	No Comment
Limit restoration of historic elements to the Lagoon, the miniature train, and the central court	69(75%)	11(12%)	12(13%)
Recreate the missing orthophonic device	55(60%)	19(21%)	18(19%)
Re-interpret various historic elements for use by contemporary visitors including the tea house, the wading areas, the carousel location, and the cabins and camping areas	69(75%)	13(14%)	10(11%)
Establish an interpretation program	57(62%)	15(16%)	20(22%)

Comments:

Total Number of Comments	25
Concerns About Recreating Orthophonic Device	6



Public Engagement Summary

Bowness Park Redevelopment: PROPOSED DESIGN
Open House Held February 18, 2009 & Online Responses

G. Please feel free to leave other comments regarding the proposed plans here:

Total Number of Comments	101
Consultants Listened and Prepared Good Plan	16
Closing Time and Security are Important	7
Have Permit Parking on Streets Adjacent to Bowness Park	5
Plan Improvements to Bowness Park in Conjunction with Baker Park	4
Build Pedestrian Bridge Connecting to Baker Park	4
No Off-Leash Dog Areas in Park	4
No Loud Speakers	2
Provide area for outdoor performances	2
Improve washrooms	1
Increase fire pits	1

